प्रज़नथ

PRAZNATH

A discourse on
Kashmiri identity and culture



Saptarishi Samvat 5089 (Chaitra Shukla Paksha-Chaitra Krishna Paksha) | Vol. 4 – No. 1 to 4 | April 2013-March 2014

An exclusive focus on Abhinavagupta

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COVER : (As also about the picture on page no. 5) Shiva as Svacchanda Bhairava, a late 19th century painting in Kashmiri miniature style. Original dimensions not exactly known, but probably 13.5 X 10.2 cms. approximately. Private collection. An imposing image of Shiva Svacchandanatha with five faces, eighteen arms, is shown standing on the outspread hands of a Shiva lookalike *vāhana* figure. It is from these five faces of Shiva, known as Īśāna, Tatpuruṣa, Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva and Aghora, that *āgamas* are said to have been revealed in five currents – the number of dualistic *āgamas* being ten, of dualist-cum-non-dualistic eighteen and of non-dualistic *āgamas* sixty-four. Abhinavagupta is said to have integrated the various streams of *āgamic* tradition, shaping them according to his monistic vision into one mainstream called Trika Shaivism, which is popularly known as Kashmir Shaivism. Symbolically, one pure consciousness is shown as assuming five faces of different colours – gold, red, blue / black and white in two shades, representing the five cosmic elements. The heads are arranged around the central face vertically as well as laterally, with large oval golden coloured nimbuses rising from behind and the Ganga falling in streams from the locks of each head. The lower part of the body of Svacchanda Bhairava is shown clad in a leopard skin while the upper part is shown bare with an elephant skin draping over the right shoulder. In his different hands he is shown carrying different weapons: a trident, an axe, a lance, a sword, a bow, an arrow, a noose, a mace, a *vajra*, a shield as well as objects like a skull, a banner, a *vīṇā*, and a *ḍamrū*. His consort, much smaller in size, is shown sitting on his lap. On his left Vishnu and Brahma, wearing diadems and *dhotis*, are shown worshiping him, while on his right stands a Kashmiri Pandit worshiper with a bunch of flowers in his hand. He is dressed in a white *pheran* and is wearing a white turban on his head in the typical Kashmiri Pandit fashion. A nimbus is shown around the head of the human *vāhana* also, who is shown in the painting like the main figure above in appearance, red complexioned, three-eyed with a serpent around the neck and adorned by the crescent moon. He can be seen wearing a lower garment of leopard skin with a long flowing scarf over his shoulders. The painting has a decorated border displaying a floral carpet design in a typical Kashmiri miniature style. The figures are exquisitely executed, showing the artist's mastery over line and colour. The painting shows that the Svacchanda Bhairava cult, which was popular in the time of Abhinavagupta continued to be religiously so and inspire artistic creativity till the end of the 19th century.

Picture: courtesy Ishwar Ashram Trust.

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Editor's note

PERSPECTIVE

This issue of Praznath is dedicated to Abhinavagupta, a comprehensive thinker of 10th - 11th century Kashmir who can be described as one of the most outstanding personalities of the philosophical and intellectual history of the world. As a philosopher he is regarded as the greatest exponent of non-dual Kashmir Shaivism or Trika Shaivism, a school of thought with its roots in Tantric culture that invites us to explore the infinite terrain of our consciousness and offers a unique vision of the relationship of Man, God and the World. As an aesthetic theorist he is without doubt the most authoritative interpreter of the Indian aesthetical thought and theory of art. His insights into the realities of existence and the depth of his spiritual experience added new dimensions to the knowledge culture and spiritual traditions of India.

We had been planning for long to bring out this issue to pay our humble tribute to a spiritual and intellectual genius whose thought and vision occupy a central, crucial place in the identity and culture of Kashmir that we have promoted through Praznath. His contribution within the philosophic stance of his non-dual Shaivism to the evolution of the values and ideals that form the bedrock of Indian ethos is so immense and overwhelming that it is impossible to fully grasp the meaning of India's cultural continuum without reference to him.

However, in bringing out this special issue on Abhinavagupta it has not been our intention to present any pretentious claim before our readers of making available to them a scholarship of Abhinavan thought in order to understand its still unknown or unexplored dimensions. We have the writings of some of the best known Abhinavan scholars gracing its pages. What we are concerned about is that despite an ever growing academic interest in Abhinavagupta and Tantra as fields of Indic studies in different countries of the world, such as France, USA, England, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Russia, Denmark, Japan to name some of them, serious study of Abhinavan thought is now restricted to a dwindling number of scholars in India and has come to almost a nought in Kashmir. What can be more saddening than the fact that with the departure of Swami Lakshman Joo, the last great master of the philosophy and practice of Trika Shaivism, and of committed scholars like B. N. Pandit and Nilakanth Gurtu, Abhinavagupta has almost become a forgotten name even among Kashmiri Pandits who claim to be legatees of the great intellectual tradition he represents but are actually drifting towards cultural vacuity due to the loss of their Sanskritic moorings. Our emphasis therefore in this issue is twofold – on refocusing attention on Abhinavagupta as the foremost representative of a system of philosophy that evolved in Kashmir and contributed immensely to the enrichment of Indian thought, and also on the cultural implications that "the lack of motivation in studying this particular system" could have, given the attempts, that have now assumed conspiratorial dimensions, to create amnesia about its significance.

But before we unfold the route map we have in this issue of Praznath for rediscovery of Abhinavagupta by our audience, we must admit that our resolve to bring it out took a decisive shape only after Prof. Kapil Kapoor, an eminent scholar of Indian culture and literary theory, (author of several books on Indian aesthetical theory and editor-in-chief of *Encyclopaedia of Hinduism*), so kindly undertook to proffer to us his valuable guidance by accepting our request to be the guest editor of the magazine for this issue. On behalf of National Manuscript Mission, Prof. Kapoor, it would be relevant for us to reveal here, had framed together with some top ranking scholars and academicians of the country, a proposal some years back for nomination of Abhinavagupta's manuscripts for UNESCO's Memory of the World International Register that, had been sent to the HRD Ministry for its onward submission to

UNESCO. Introducing Abhinavagupta as "an outstanding Indian thinker in philosophy, tantra, aesthetics / literary theory and music", the 136- page proposal presented a list of 248 manuscripts of Abhinavagupta's works that transmit text in six subject areas and eight Indian scripts and are preserved in several manuscript libraries of India. The proposal, supported by research inputs from concerned scholars throughout the country, said that Abhinavagupta's works "document a knowledge culture whose intellectual and artistic influence once permeated Northeast Asia, Central Asia and South Asia." It pointed to the importance of Abhinava's works, the influence of his thought in the world of philosophy, his aesthetics "deriving from the continuity between the abstract and the real", "inextricably bound with the nature of art representation", and defining various aspects of the Rasa experience. The proposal document had referred to the global significance of Abhinavagupta, his relevance and pertinence in the contemporary world and thought, which was "attested by the comparative and trans-cultural interest in his thought, particularly his philosophy and aesthetics, in some major universities and by modern scholars". Illustrating the point by specific examples. "No passage to the Indian mystic theories and practices, the Tantra and the Yoga", the proposal points out, "is obtained unless Abhinavagupta is accessed." Unfortunately, however, the this most valuable document about preservation of India's knowledge culture was dumped.



We found this document extremely interesting and useful and wasted no time in culling extracts from it for introducing Abhinavagupta to our readers -- for many of whom he could well be an unfamiliar or not so familiar figure -- highlighting in particular various aspects of his work and personality that have an appeal for the modern man. They will note that even as the scholars talk of the amazing spiritual and intellectual accomplishments of this "exceptional mind" in this document, they express grave concern over the waning and shrinking of his influence which has now become restricted to a very small esoteric circle of followers of his doctrine in the "changed historical context", with Kashmir "no longer owning up his thought", and through "loss of access generally to Sanskrit", which has suffered a substantial change in status. The document leaves it to the "contemporary conscience to see that the culture of which Abhinava has been the "most profound exponent" is not "erased through deliberately hostile physical vandalism, neglect, apathy and / or ridicule." On our part, we have quoted this view in some detail for the reason that we deeply share the anxiety over the looming threat to this knowledge culture, or rather an entire way of life. This, in fact, is one our main purpose in bringing out an issue specially focused on this great Kashmiri thinker.

We have another distinguished scholar, a leading expert of non-dual Shaiva philosophy, Prof. Navjivan Rastogi, giving expression to a similar concern for "refurbishing our understanding" of Abhinavan thought in the present rather disconcerting circumstances. In his article *Re-accessing Abhinavagupta*, which sets the tone for our discourse in this issue, as do the views referred to above, he describes Abhinavagupta as the "tallest intellectual figure of medieval India by virtue of his all-encompassing genius" who is emerging as "the single most potential and creative factor in the centre of total Kashmirian contribution to the history of Indian metaphysical speculation and one of the most potent sources of the Indian contribution to the world thought". Himself one of the most outstanding scholars in the field of Kashmir Shaivism and Tantra, , Prof. Rastogi laments that even as there is an ever growing craze in Western and other countries to explore Abhinavagupta more and more, with scholars

churning out "first class studies" on him, back home the pace of serious investigations has slackened in the area after the exit of pioneering stalwarts like Prof. K. C. Pandey, Prof. K. S. Iyer, M.M. Gopinath Kaviraj, Swami Lakshman joo , Jaidev Singh and Dr. B. N. Pandit. There is therefore an urgent need, he feels, "for reappraising our academic priorities and reassessing the potential of Abhinavgupta".

As Prof. Rastogi puts it, Abhinavagupta's personality is "a living realization of his vision of non-dual Shaivism" non-dualism to him meaning "fullness, harmony and integrality *(pūrṇatā, sāmarasya* and *sāmastya)*". Describing Abhinava as "*prajñā puruṣa*, embodying the essential features of Saraswati and Naṭarāja fused into one", Prof. Rastogi says in his article that his whole personality is structured as a thinker "who displays encyclopaedic fervour in whatever he touches". Not only is his genius integral but integrating also, as in his works is evident - *Tantrāloka, Mālinī-vijaya-vārttilka, Parātriśikā-vivarṇa, Īśwarapratyabhijñā-vimarśinī, Īśwarapratyabhijñā- vivṛtti-vimarśinī, Dhvanyāloka Locana, Abhinavabhāratī* etc. While as a philosopher, he has contributed significantly to all the monistic strands of Shaiva-Shākta thought -- Krama, Kaula, Trika and Pratyābhijñā – he is also "equally famous for his contribution to the fields of literary criticism and aesthetics", establishing "an inner chord" between the two. Perceiving reality as a synthesis between word and meaning in accordance with the Shaiva tradition of Kashmir, Abhinavagupta in his linguistic thesis finds "pure word identical with pure awareness", emerging as "a philosopher of language par excellence" and "lays bare the subtle inner linkage obtaining between his theories of word, meaning and conveyance of art experience", says Prof. Navjivan Rastogi.

Analysing various aspects of Abhinavagupta's "encyclopaedic genius", Prof. Rastogi observes that he is the only thinker who applies his philosophical thesis to other areas of life like "art experience, dramatic presentation, Tantric praxis, yogic transcendental realization of the self and mundane sensual ecstasy", and views them all as "various expressions of the ultimate self-experience". Thus art or aesthetic experience to him is "self-recognitive experience which reflects fullness of joy", and is communicated to the aesthete, rasika, by employing the suggestive power of language.

In Prof. Rastogi's view, the greatest feature of Abhinavagupta's thought lies not in his extreme originality or his capacity to rise above or break away from tradition but in the contemporaenity and futuristic potential of its content. And perhaps nothing is more reflective of the *raison d'être* of this special issue of Praznath than our full agreement with Prof. Rastogi's concluding statement: "The best of Kashmir is embedded in and represented by Abhinavagupta. As tradition has it, his birth in Kashmir was by his own compassionate choice, it is, therefore, our sacred duty not to allow Abhinavagupta die in the land of his birth."

If Abhinavagupta's Shaiva metaphysics has the futuristic potential of giving today's disorientated humanity a new sense of direction, his aesthetics of *rasa*, we feel, takes us to a terrain where the mystic experience converges on the aesthetic experience, affirming that a literary composition is as efficacious as any spiritual discipline in leading us to liberation or *mokṣa*, the ultimate goal (*puruṣārtha*) of life. Emphasizing the transcendental nature of the feeling that an aesthetic presentation evokes, we find Abhinavagupta saying that it is characterised by *viśrānti* or a repose in one's own self, "a form of blissful serenity of liberation". We have in this issue an intensive and in-depth analysis by Prof. Kapil Kapoor of the whole gamut of Abhinavagupta's exposition on Bharata's theory of *rasa* "as it emerges in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*". Prof. Kapoor's article entitled *Abhinavagupta on Bharata's Theory of Rasa* is, to put it in his own words, "an attempt to understand the nature of *rasa* and the processes and determinants involved in its realization" in the light of lits exposition in *Abhinavabhāratī.*

The article takes us on a long journey through Abhinavagupta's interpretations and explanations on all aspects of Bharata's treatise, the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. Questions relating to the eleven elements shown by Bharata as constituting *nāṭya*, his definition of *rasa* and the process of its realization, enumeration of *sthāyī bhāva*s and their corresponding *rasa*s, the relation of *bhāva* and *rasa* and other key concepts are discussed till we come to the interpretation of Bharata's *rasa-sūtra* or his formulation on *rasa* which says that the conjunction of *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* and *sañcārī bhāva*s evokes the aesthetic emotion. The arguments of the earlier *ācārya*s Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa, Shrīshaṅkuka, Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka and Bhaṭṭa Tauta in the debates that ensued in wake of the attempt to decode Bharata's condensed but pregnant aphorism are available to us only in Abhinavagupta's *Abhinavabhāratī* as the original works are lost. Abhinava examines their arguments one by one and reaches his own conclusions about the nature of the aesthetic

experience in accordance with his philosophy of non-dual Shaivism even as he borrows an idea or two, like that of *sādhāraṇīkaraṇa* for instance, from Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka. As it emerges from his commentary on the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, and his other works, Abhinavagupta reveals a penetrating insight into the principles of beauty and art creation as he applies the concepts of Shaiva philosophy like *camatkāra*, which is nothing but perfect self-consciousness, and *ānanda* or bliss, to the realm of aesthetics. He thus equates the bliss from aesthetic relishing in its true nature with the realization of the deeper reality of the self. This discovery of one's true self comes in a flash and is devoid of all obstacles and limitations of time and space (*vīta-vighna-pratītti*).

With such a philosophic view, it is but natural that the notion of *śānta rasa* the state of tranquil inner serenity, is central to Abhinavaguta's theory of *rasa*-aesthetics. Bharata had described *śānta* as the *prākṛta* or natural psychological state of a man and many others also vouched for it, but it was Abhinavagupta who argued forcefully and convincingly in favour of accepting it as the ninth *rasa*. Presenting it in a wider perspective, he gave it a sound philosophical basis with *tattvajñāna*, or knowledge of the self, born of *vairājña* as its *sthāyī bhāva* or abiding mental state. The three *puruṣārthas* or ends of life, *kāma*, *artha* and *dharma*, he argued, are promoted by the cognitions, *cittavṛtti*s, of *rati* or love etc. and made experiencable as *rasa*s, the "*cittavṛtti* which promotes the fourth end *mokṣa* should also be made experiencable as *śānta rasa*", with *nirveda* as its *sthāyī bhāva*. The *sthāyī*s of all other *rasa*s could be regarded as the *sañcārībhāvas* of this *rasa* which has aesthetic relishing of the bliss of liberation as its final goal, he posits.

We have yet another prominent scholar Dr. Radhavallabh Tripathi exploring "Abinavagupta's aesthetic universe" and describing him as "the greatest among the makers of Shaiva aesthetics". Abhinava, says Dr. Tripathi, a prolific writer widely acclaimed for his original contributions to *Nāṭyaśāstra* and *Sāhityaśāstra*, does not refute or reject the ideas of his predecessors, as is generally believed, but seeing linkages and interconnections with diverse traditions builds upon elements from them to formulate his own theory. He gives a sound but singular philosophical basis to Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's interpretation of Bharata's *Rasa Sūtra* and also revisits the views of Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa and Shaṅkuka. And that is where his contribution to aesthetic theory lies, according to Dr. Radhavallabh Tripathi. Abhinavaguta, he further says, accepts the Trika worldview of the Ultimate Reality being both transcendent (*viśvottīrṇa*) and immanent (*viśvamaya*) and applies it to provide a comprehensive basis to his own theory of aesthetics and art creation. This is clearly discernible when we see him dealing extensively with aesthetic ideas in his commentary on *Īśvarapratyabhijñā* and his monumental *Tantrāloka*. Kashmir Shaivism uses the analogy of light to define the nature of consciousness, points out Dr. Tripathi. Both The Universal Self and the individual self are characterised by the aspects of *prakāśa* (light of consciousness) and *vimarśa* (reflective awareness) according to this philosophy, he explains. While the cosmos is mirrored in the Universal Self, as the Shaiva texts say, the world of art is mirrored in the artist. To put it in Shaiva phjlosophical terms, just as the world is *ābhāsa* or semblance of the Universal Self, art is the *ābhāsa* of the artist. Abhinavgupta therefore treats the aesthetic experience and the experience of realising the Self at par. In a human individual, consciousness is present in a contracted form, but when the *kañcuka*s that limit one's consciousness are removed, one experiences that which is unlimited. In the same way, when many people assemble at a *melaka* or public celebration, consciousness in seemingly different bodily forms radiates and expands, fusing into one. Similarly, when many people are watching a drama or listening to a musical recital, everyone is so engrossed in the situation (*tanamaya*) that the bliss that is felt is not limited to any one individual but belongs to all. It is as if many mirrors are reflecting the same light. In aesthetic experience, as in Shaiva spiritual *sādhanā*, the divide between subject and object disappears.

According to Dr. Tripathi, the greatest achievement of Abhinavagupta in the field of aesthetics is his viewpoint on *śānta rasa*. Although Ānandavardhana had accepted *śānta* as an independent *rasa* and Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka too was one of its major endorsers, Abhinavagupta, followed his preceptor Bhaṭṭa Tauta in giving it the status of a *mahārasa* with *tattvajñāna* as its *sthāyī bhāva*. He gave a proper philosophical perspective to the earlier views on the issue of *śānta rasa*.

We have two more interesting discussions of Abinavagupta's aesthetic theory by Neeraj Kumar and Geetika Kher Kaw, both young intellectuals and researchers whose fields of interest are closely correlated to our discourse on Kashmir's indigenous intellectual and cultural traditions. In his article Neeraj Kumar seeks to "situate his aesthetic ideas vis-a-vis his spiritual experience", dwelling in particular on the notion of *camatkāra* in its spiritual as well as aesthetic connotations as a feeling of rapture free from all limitations which is

the nature of *samvit* or consciousness. He also seems to be fascinated by the prominence that Abhinavagupta gives to the *sahṛdaya* or the spectator / reader and discusses in detail his view that "consciousness expands in the fullness of bliss" when sensitively equipped people together watch a public performance like a play or a music or dance recital or even a *kula* ritual. In her article, Geetika Kaw Kher, who teaches art at Amity University, on the other hand makes an attempt to briefly but intensely explore the fundamental concepts of Abhinava's *rasa*-aesthetics.

Clearly, there is a deep interconnection between Abhinavagupta's *rasa*-aesthetics and his philosophic doctrine of *Pratyabhijñā* or re-cognition of one's real self's identity with the universal self. He equates aesthetic experience with *camatkāra* or consciousness of the self revealed to us in a flash, free from all limitations –which is only another name for *vimarśa* or reflective awareness. This makes aesthetic rapture an experience in which the barriers between immanence and transcendence completely melt down. Establishment by Abhinavagupta of *śānta*, the *rasa* of tranquillity, as the ultimate in aesthetic experience by linking it to the pursuit of the highest goal of human life, *mokṣa* or spiritual liberation, also points to his endeavour to emphasize the eventual transcendent nature of the feeling that an aesthetic presentation evokes. Both *rasa*-aesthetics and non-dual Shaivism had, in fact, become definitive elements of the intellectual ethos of the time when Abhinavagupta appeared on the scene.

As well-known scholar and theologist, Moti Lal Pandit says in his article *Trika Shaivism: An Introduction*, "Shaivism had become so embedded in the psyche of the Kashmiri populace that it had branched itself into various schools of philosophical thought, such as Spanda, Pratyabhijñā, Krama and Kaula", and Abhinava integrated them all into Trika through his magnum opus *Tantrāloka* and his commentaries on such seminal texts as Utpala's *Īshvarapratyabhijñā*. Moti Lal Pandit, acclaimed author of a number of books on Kashmir Shaivism and Buddhism, then proceeds to describe the *Bhairava-āgamic* sources of *Tantrāloka* and the "esoteric practices of Tantrism" that prevailed at that time and were described by Abhinavagupta. He sheds significant light on the contents of *Tantrāloka* and discusses comprehensively important aspects and principles of Trika Shaivism as finally shaped by Abhinava, under the sub-titles 'The Nature of Bondage', 'The Nature of Liberation', 'The Nature of Reality', 'The Nature of the Manifest', 'The Principle of Vibration', 'The Number of Manifestational Categories and Realms', 'The Classification of Impurity', 'The Classification of the Principles of Animation' and 'The Concept of Divine Grace' -- virtually encompassing all the core areas of the Trika doctrine and praxis. Moti Lal Pandit's article is not directly focused on Abhinavagupta, but what it engages us in constitutes the whole trajectory of his philosophical and theological thought.

It was through Abhinavagupta's brilliant exegesis of the Shaivāgamic texts belonging to different schools popular in Kashmir that Kashmir Shaivism acquired its present refined and sophisticated philosophical level. Though he refers to a staggering 900 of these *āgamas* and other texts in his works, he relied mainly on the *Mālinīvijaya* as well as the *Svacchanda*, *Netra*, and *Vijñānabhairava* tantras as sources for his monistic interpretation of their mostly ritualistic content. We have Prof. Navjivan Rastogi again explaining in an abstract of his paper *Introducing Kashmir Shaivism* the basic principles that underlie the philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism in the form it was finally expounded by Abhinavagupta. Prof. Rastogi terms the view of reality presented by this system of thought as "a life-affirming attitude of the Tantric culture that makes it a truly humanistic movement". Strangely, however, this culture – a rich symbiosis of non-dual Shaiva thought and Mahāyāna / Vajrayāna doctrines -- that prevailed widely in Kashmir with its tremendous implications for Kashmir's intellectual ethos till the advent of Islamic rule has hardly been taken note of by Kashmir's present day historians. It was this culture that gave space to "diverse currents of human wisdom" and accepted everyone into its fold, rejecting the barriers of caste, creed and gender, as stated clearly by Abhinavagupta in the *Gitārthasaṁgraha*. And, yes sadly, there has been no effort to study it or take into cognisance its role in shaping the Kashmiri psyche, perhaps due to the success of the anti-memory strategy put into operation by the hegemonic forces in the Valley.

Abhinavagupta's speculations on the nature of language hold a prominent place in his philosophical thinking. There is a tremendous scope for scholastic discussion of his ideas and conceptions about the relation of thought and various stages of verbalization, in modern linguistic context. Italian scholar Prof. Raffaele Tourella, a student of the legendary Raneiro Gnoli, is one of the most eminent modern intellectuals who has been devoting much labour to studying and extensively writing about various aspects of Abhinavagupta and Utpaldeva's mystico-philosophical approach to the evolution and nature of language, reflecting on its "essential core". We at Praznath are

indebted to him for contributing an illuminating article, entitled *Abhinavagupta and the Word: Some Thoughts*, for this special issue in which we find him exploring the depths of Abhinava's thought related to *vāc* or the Word and its identification with the Supreme Consciousness as well as its various evolutionary stages.

Closely related to linguistic thought is the Indian tradition of exposition with interpretation through *nirvacana* or textual semantics as its foundational principle. Analysing the "centrality of language in Indian thought", Prof. Rajnish Mishra takes us in his article *Abhinavagupta on Exposition and Meaning* into a not much explored area of the processes and methodology of exegesis in the great thinker's works. Prof. Mishrar recounts the multiple devices of exposition of meaning employed by Indian linguists like Yaska and others and dwells in depth and detail on the peculiarity of instruments and tools, like *nirvacana* (etymology) and inter-textuality, used by Abhinavagupta to explain *āgamic* texts, as in the case of the term *anuttara*, expounding the "whole of Kashmir Shaiva philosophy through this single key concept".

In this issue of Praznath, we also carry a very interesting paper entitled *The Monkey Grammarian and the Wise Alchemist* by diplomat and scholar Ȯscar Pujol, who holds a Ph. D. degree in Sanskrit from Banaras Hindu University and was till recently Cultural Attaché in the Spanish Embassy in New Delhi. In the paper Pujol tries to show how Octavio Paz's reflections on the function of poetic language in his book *The Monkey Grammarian* present a viewpoint that is "close to Abhinavagupta in particular and, in general, to certain aspects of Tantra". Octavio Paz, it may be mentioned, is regarded as "a dazzling writer" and one of Latin America's greatest poets. He was Mexico's ambassador to India in the 1960's and was greatly interested in Indian culture.

Referring to Abhinavagupta's description of the nature of the delectability of the *rasa*-experience as *alaukika* or non-mundane, Pujol says that "for Abhinavagupta "the quintessence of reality is precisely Absolute Joy". The aesthetic experience for him, he says, is joyous because "it momentarily reveals the nature of this ultimate reality to us." For Octavio Paz, he observes, quoting his own words that "the reality revealed by poetry and that appears behind language is ... literally intolerable and maddening ... which couldn't be farther from the assumption of Abhinavagupta who considers that reality to be joyous and radiant mass of pure consciousness."

Ajñāna or ignorance in Kashmir Shaivism does not mean total absence of knowledge but limited or deviant knowledge. But whatever it may be, it distorts our perception of things and prevents us from being our own selves. "... Ignorance is universally perceived to be the cause of man's bondage in this mundane world", says Prof. Debabrata Sensharma, well-known Sanskrit and Shaiva scholar, in his paper *Abhinavagupta and the Concept of Ignorance in Kashmir Shaivism.* Surveying conceptualization of ignorance in some representative orthodox schools of Indian philosophy like the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṁkhya-Yoga and Advaita-Vedanta, Prof. Sensharma examines how it is conceived by the Advaita Shaiva school of Kashmir which links it to *mala* or the impurity that contracts a human being's consciousness and makes him forget his true Shiva-nature.

"Abhinavagupta", says Prof. Sensharma, "adds another dimension to the Advaita Shaiva conception of ignorance by postulating two distinct kinds of ignorance". These are *pauruṣa ajñāna* or spiritual ignorance and *baudha ajñāna* or intellectual ignorance. Abhinavagupta defines the first as "*ātmani anātmabodha*", or the experience of not-self in the self, and the second as "*anātmani ātmabodha*" or the experience of self in the not-self, Prof. Sensharma points out, analysing both the kinds of ignorance in the light of Abhinavagupta's exposition. Prof. Debabrata Sensharma, Surender Paul Professor of Indological Studies, Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, is the well-known author of *An Introduction to the Advaita Shaivism of Kashmir*, *Aspects of Tantra Yoga* and *Philosohy of Sadhana* (with foreword by Paul Eduardo Muller-Ortega).

Regarded as the foremost disciple of Abhinavagupta, Kṣemarāja is known for his contribution to the development of non-dual Kashmir Shaivism. In a brief but illuminating paper, Dr. Sthaneshwar Timalsina, Professor of Religious Studies at San Diego State University, USA, deciphers the imagery of Bhairava, the central deity of Kaula and Trika Tāntrism, as depicted by Abhinava in his not so widely known hymn, *Bhairavāṇukaraṇastava*. The paper "aims to initiate a reading of Tantric visual culture in relation to its literary culture", writes Dr. Timalsina, who has translated the hymn most brilliantly, bringing out the symbolism of Bhairava's attributes. Abhinavagupta himself, it may be noted, has written a very beautiful *Bhairavastava* or Bhairava hymn, which, extremely popular as it is, also appears on the pages of this issue.

Abhinavagupta's *Parmārthasāra*, the adaptation of an earlier work by Ādiśeṣa, is an important text in the Trika-Kula tradition of Kashmir Shaivism. Dr. Jeffrey S. Lidke,

an American academician, has made *Parmārthasāra* the subject for his doctoral thesis which we partly reproduce here along with his lucid and beautiful translation of its 105 verses. In his thesis Dr. Lidke has made an attempt to "illumine" the fusion of philosophy and practice in this text "in the context of Tantric *sādhanā*" while tracing the history of the tradition.

The English section of the magazine concludes with a review of the reputed Austrian scholar Bettina Baumer's "interpretative study" and translation of one of Abhianvagupta's most important works *Parātriśikā Vivaraṇa* under the title *Abhinavagupta's Hermeneutics of the Absolute Anuttaraprakriyā* by the noted Sanskrit scholar, translator and ex-diplomat A. N. D. Haksar. The work "deals mainly with metaphysical-linguistic conceptions".

Our Hindi section begins with a brief introductory write–up on Abhinavagupta's life and works. The multifaceted genius that Abhinavagupta was, we find him emerging as a great connoisseur of the performing arts like drama, music and dance in the *Abhinavabhāratī*. Dr. Sudha Mallaiya, expresses the view that we have to rely on Abhinavagupta's interpretations of Bharata's exposition to understand his ideas about the nature of dance as an art form in his *Nāṭyaśāstra*. In her Hindi article titled *Abinavagupta aur Nṛtyakalā*, we have her discussing in detail about his conception of the relationship of *nāṭya* and *nṛtta* and his definition of concepts like *karaṇa* and *aṅgahāra* as well as his views on the issue of the distinction between the *tāṇḍava* and *lāsya* forms of dance.

The concept of *vāk* or the Supreme Word has always occupied a prominent position in Indian philosophical thought, perhaps because it acts as bridge between the two poles of human life and the world, says Dr. Meera Rastogi initiating her discussion on the linguistic speculation in non-dual Shaivism of Kashmir and its importance in perceiving the nature of the Ultimate Reality that cannot but be emphasized. Different schools of Indian philosophy have analysed the concept in different ways, says the reputed Sanskrit professor from Lucknow University, with the idealist Advaita Vedanta finding it relevant in everyday life but having no effect on the Absolute whose pure and unchanging nature it impinges upon. All knowledge is permeated by language and it is impossible to imagine the world or cognise any object without it. The philosopher Bhartṛhari equates it with the Absolute and for non-dualist Shaiva school of thought, which too is idealist and has its roots in the the *āgamic* worldview, the world has emanated from the Word as the manifestation of the Ultimate Reality. Abhinavagupta, the erudite scholar says, has tried to decode the mysteries of all aspects of *vāk*, holding all the contexts in which it is sought to be interpreted, philosophical, literary and tantric, as of equal significance. On the one hand he makes the philosophical contexts of *vāk* clear in the *Īśvarapratyabhijñā Vimarśinī* and *Īśvarapratyabhijñā Vivṛtti-vimarśinī* and on the other throws light on its literary contexts in the *Abhinavabhāratī* and *Dhvanyāloka Locana*, while in the *Tantrāloka*, *Parātriṁśikā Vivaraṇa* and *Mālinīvijayavārtika* he tries to explain its Tantric contexts.

Prof. Nilakanth Gurtu was the last of the great modern day Sanskrit scholars of Kashmir who wrote authoritatively on various aspects of non-dual Shaiva philosophy. With a number of brilliantly written scholarly works in Hindi on some important texts of Kashmir Shaivism like *Parmārthasāra*, *Parātriśikā*, *Spanda Kārikā* and *Parāpraveśikā* to his credit, he had earned a place in the front row of scholars in the field. His departure a few years back is a great blow to the tradition of Shaiva scholarship in Kashmir. We are reproducing in this issue the Foreword written by him to his book in Hindi on Abhinavagupta's *Parmārthasāra* as a tribute to his memory. The piece, though only very brief, has certainly enriched the contents of this issue, we feel. Abhinavagupta had written *Parmārthasāra* to help his not so intelligent disciples to grasp the essential tenets of the Trika philosophy.

As the last item in the Hindi section we have an article by Dr. Yogesh Sharma titled *Trika Darśan mein Ābhāsa, Pratbimban evam Kāvya Prakriyā* in which the young scholar analyses the process of poetic creation in terms of the theories of *ābhāsa* or appearances and reflection in the Trika philosophy.

Despite our numerous shortcomings which came in the way of this special issue taking the shape we really wanted it to have, we have the *chutzpah* of offering it to our readers, even though after inordinate delay. We hope that this issue, our humble tribute to Abhinavagupta, will be helpful, to whatever degree, in bringing about the *camatkāra* of *pratyabhijñā* at least among those who claim to be inheritors of his vast and rich spiritual and intellectual legacy.

SS Toshkhani

Dr. Shashi Shekhar Toshkhani

Overview

Aum Abhinava

Prof. Kapil Kapoor
and his team of scholars



[Some years back, some eminent scholars and academics of the country led by the famed literary and cultural theorist and chief editor of the Encyclopaedia of Hinduism, Prof. Kapil Kapoor, prepared a proposal for the nomination of the manuscripts of Abhinavagupta for UNESCO's Memory of the World International Register. The proposal, supported by valuable documents and research inputs, was submitted to the HRD Ministry for onward submission to UNESCO. A list of 248 manuscripts of Abhinavagupta written in eight Indian scripts and transmitting texts in six subject areas and preserved in the country's best known manuscript libraries. But, the proposal never reached UNESCO.

Years later, however, Prof. Kapoor was happy to share with us the contents of the valuable 136-page document so painstakingly compiled by him as he came to know of our intention to bring out a special issue of Praznath dedicated to that greatest intellectual and spiritual genius from Kashmir, Abhinavagupta, whose contribution to the understanding of India's cultural and intellectual traditions is crucially important. Prof. Kapil Kapoor also very kindly agreed to our request of guiding us as the guest editor of this special issue dedicated to Abhinavagupta. We are presenting here extracts from the above-mentioned historical document titled 'Aum Abhinava' for the benefit of our readers.]

Abhinavagupta (CE 940-1015), an outstanding Indian thinker in **philosophy, tantra, aesthetics/literary theory, and music** who lived in Srinagar, Kashmir in the 10th century and composed 41 *granthas* or texts.



His Work

Abhinavagupta's works are the most comprehensive and basic access to the philosophy and practice of Kula, Krama, Spanda and Pratyabhijñā-darśana, all compactly described as 'Kashmir Śaivism' by some authors, a school of thought that has a well identified tradition of which Abhinavagupta is the most authoritative exponent. These spiritual doctrines also underly the edifice of the aesthetics, the poetics and the performing arts in India that are more or less fully determined by the ideas and structurations detailed by Abhinavagupta.

As spiritual doctrines *per se*, they syncretically present not only the specific inputs of Abhinavagupta and his direct predecessors in the field but a holistic core of the knowledge philosophies of the Vedic, the Tantric and the Buddhist mainstreams in India. The value lies not only in the picture at the time of Abhinavagupta but the subsequent developments in these fields in India because the impact of Abhinavagupta is continued throughout the Indian thought. It is worth mentioning that his ideas are at the root of the Siddhānta Śaivism also which was to later play a crucial role in the development of the medieval poetry of the southern languages like Kannada.

Abhinavagupta's Works

Today, there are 248 manuscripts of Abhinavagupta's works, available in various libraries, spread all over India.
(41 major and minor works - chronologically)

1. Bodhapañcadaśikā
2. Parātriṁśikā vivṛttti/vivaraṇa
3. Mālinīvijayavārttika
4. Tantrāloka
5. Tantrasāra
6. Tantravaṭadhanikā
7. Dhvanyālokalocana
8. Abhinavabhāratī
9. Bhagavadgītārthasaṁgraha
10. Paramārthasāra
11. Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī (laghvī vimarśinī)
12. Īśvarapratyabhijñāvivṛttivimarśinī (vṛhatī vimarśinī)
13. Kramastotra
14. Dehasthadevatācakrastotra
15. Bhairavastotra
16. Paramārthadvādaśikā
17. Anubhavanivedana
18. Paramārthacarcā
19. Mahopadeśaviśayaṭīkā
20. Anuttaraśatikā/ Anuttari
21. Tantroccaya
22. Ghaṭakarparkulakavivṛti



23. Kramakeli
24. Śivadṛṣṭyālocanā
25. Pūrvapañcikā
26. Padārthapraveśaniraṇaya
27. Prakīrṇakavivaraṇa (commentary on the third *kārikā* of Bhartṛhari's Vākyapadīya)
28. Prakaraṇavivaraṇa
29. Kāvyakautukavivaraṇa
30. Kathāmukhatilakaṁ
31. Laghvīprakriyā
32. Bhedavādavidraṇa
33. Devīstotravivaraṇa
34. Tattvādhvaprakāśikā
35. Śiva-Śaktyavinābhāvastotra
36. Biamba-pratibimbavāda
37. Paramārthasaṁgraha
38. Anuttaraśataka
39. Prakaraṇastotra
40. Nāṭyālocanà
41. Anuttaratattvavimarśinī

Source Libraries Map

Importance of Abhinavagupta's Works

No passage to the Indian mystic theories and practices, the Tantra and the Yoga, is obtained unless Abhinavagupta is accessed. No understanding of the methodology of Indian cult formation and initiation ceremonies, the role of the Guru in Indian spiritual praxis is possible unless one goes to Abhinavagupta.

This philosophy of devotion to the Śiva principle is one of the two major competing theistic systems – Vaiṣṇava, the principle of Viṣṇu being the other one. He argued that the structures of the microcosm and the macrocosm were identical and tried to find a key to the knowledge of nature in man's knowledge. His psychic-physical analysis of the human cognitive frame apart from setting up a theory of cognition and cognitive processes also sheds so much valid light on chemistry of the human body and medicine. As a necessary analogue, he posited psychic-physical practices (*sādhanā*) that combined the traditional aim of spiritual liberation with enjoyment of the world. He countered in this sense both the denial of this material world by the then dominant Vedanta School and the Buddhist doctrine of renunciation in the history of ideas.

His works document a knowledge culture whose intellectual and artistic influence once permeated North East Asia, Central Asia and South Asia. They document, apart from aesthetics and music, his critique of other Schools of Śaivism and Indian philosophy, his own Kaula and Pratyabhijñā schools of Śaiva philosophy and some years later was influential in the modulation of Buddhist Schools such as Vajrayāna. This thought generated considerable creative artistic energy that expressed itself as a widespread movement, 12th century onwards, that has left evidence in the form of innumerable sculptures and temples in South Asia. But this thought has since then become restricted to individuals and groups due to (i) the changed historical context (Kashmir where this thought flourished underwent almost religious conversion to Islam) that no longer owns up this thought, and (ii) loss of access generally to Sanskrit, the language of the texts, through a consequent shift in its status, for a number of reasons, from a common language to a language of ritual.

His works are truly the heritage of mankind, being the only surviving records of the expression by an exceptional mind of a Non-Theocentric Knowledge Culture With this culture becoming esoteric in its own homeland, this knowledge system itself is threatened and not just the documents. As the records presented here show, a good deal of the original work known to have once existed is already lost. If they are lost or their knowledge becomes opaque, an important stream of human thought shall be in danger of being irretrievably lost.

Abhinavagupta's Influence on World Thought

Therefore his thought held an appeal to all Indians irrespective of caste, sex and age and therefore greatly influenced Indian philosophy and was widely adhered to all over the sub-continent, Far East, Korea and Japan and across South Asia as well, till its going into abeyance along with other Indian systems due to changed historical context in the 13th century or so.

In the world of philosophy, in the perennial debate



between matter and mind, between idealism and realism, Abhinavagupta's thought is of immense significance for its reconciliation of the two apparently contradictory principles, a reconciliation that is a necessary precondition for any philosophy of aesthetics. It is for this reason that modern scholarship often draws attention to the similarities between Abhinavagupata's postulates and those of, for example, Immanuel Kant, particularly his distinction between the world of phenomena and 'things-in-themselves'. He asserts that from the primordial energized matter, *Śiva-pṛthvī-tattva* all creation evolves as a continuum without any division or opposition such as subtle versus gross, divine versus mundane. His ontology, therefore, is not hierarchical but configurational.

His Aesthetics

The specific articulations of his system, the Pratyabhijñā and the Tantra released great creative energy and there was an efflorescence of sculpture, painting, iconography and temple architecture as far as North East and South Asia besides India. Abhinavagupta asserts that the world of appearance, *prātibhāsika sattā*, is as real as the essence, the *tattvārthika sattā*. Abhinavagupta not only admits the reality of the world, while accepting its evolution out of a spiritual ontological principle he called *Śiva tattva*, but posits this reality as effulgent, beautiful.

Abhinavagupta's aesthetics, deriving from this continuity between the abstract and the real, is inextricably bound with the nature of art representation and considers the aesthetic experience (*rasa*) as not at all different from, is in fact conditioned by, all the substantial causal factors (*vibhāva* etc.). This shifted the focus away from the object to its representation bringing into focus various modes of representation including 'ornamentation' (*alaṁkāra*) as the symbolic means of communicating the essence (*bhāva*) of the object represented. The other part of his aesthetic theory is his definition of art as *abhinaya*, enactment, and this requires the representation to be dynamic, live as it were. The symbiosis of the symbolic, the ornamental and the dynamic in his theory of art explains the rich detail of the temple Gopurams of South India and of the temples of South Asia, the almost 'live' sculpture of Naṭarāja, the dancing Shiva and of the dancing Ganesha. This explains the *mudrās*, the dance postures portrayed in the Chidambaram temple of Naṭarāja in the iconograpl

Influence on Art in Asia

This grand reconciliation between the abstract and the real, between the spiritual and the material produced powerful thought and art currents in India (witness the great Bṛhadeshwara temple at Thanjavur in South India) that travelled with the great South Indian Chola kings to South Asia and with monks to East Asia. Innumerable temples dot till this day the landscapes of Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia and Vietnam. The icons and paintings of Bināyaka (one of the Japanese names for Ganesha) in the Daigoji monastery at Kyoto, Japan and the trident bearing Maheswara in the drawings and sculptures of Japanese monk painters (beginning with what is known as Heian 2 Fujiwara period and its flowering in the subsequent phases of Japanese art history) are eloquent living testimony to Abhinavagupta's conception of art as effulgence. These portrayals capture the synthesis of the Buddhist and the Śiva *tantra* that Abhinavagupta established in what is in fact a remarkable reconciliation of the contending frameworks.

Uniqueness of Knowledge Constitution The Exegetical Mode

In India, the scholars have invariably expressed themselves in the form of exegesis. All the important texts on Indian knowledge are in that form. It is important to note that this extends to practice also. For example, an Indian music or dance performance is almost invariably even today presented as a transmission of received instructions from a direct and long line of teachers. This mode, usually described as the *guru-śiṣya paramparā* (teacher-taught chain), reflects a particular hypothesis of the Indian mind: Knowledge progresses through creative narration, not innovation.

Abhinavagupta is strictly within this framework. All the works that he has composed are either in the form of exegetical expositions of works by his predecessors or in the form of comprehensive compendiums of knowledge systems. As is frequent in Indian history of ideas, the 'exegesis' becomes an integral and indispensable core, influencing the entire subsequentiality of the particular branch of learning.

Significance for Knowledge Cultures

Most significantly, he is perhaps the last spokesman of an alternative knowledge culture – a Non-Theocentric Knowledge Culture – the Vedic/ Āgamic, 'pagan' if you please (as against the Hebraic God-centered knowledge culture) – a knowledge system with distinct ontology, distinct belief system, distinct modes of worship and distinct practices in the arts and their reception.

This has to do with the intellectual chronophony of the human species. The early phase will be called pagan, a term that has been used as a pejorative in the vocabulary of the later voice which we shall call proto-prophetic.

The basic difference is that the pagans thought of gods essentially as members of a species so that religious practice was a game between partners. Pagus, from which 'pagan' is derived, meant 'the frontier regions outside the edge of towns' or the 'village' in opposition to the 'city'. Thus it represented 'lack of security'. The idea of security was built into the city that ultimately developed into the religions fortified by the prophetic discourse. Later, the evangelic enterprise added a new dimension to it, the mission of extending the city to the entire world so that the element of risk was entirely removed. The Evangelic City, in its many incarnations, it is recognized, is the backbone of the Prophetic Discourses (Christianity, Islam, Marxism), the Enlightenment, Modernity, the White Man's Burden, Scientism, and the Unipolar World. In the West, there have been individual and group dissenting responses, a Niezstche here or there, and some post-modernists; but there has been no systemic knowledge culture to resist its unbreakable sway.

By contrast, the functional paganistics have either disappeared or are in the process of disappearing from the globe. The Indian mind, as intellected in Sanskrit and the folk writings and proxemics, represents the most reliable, the most ancient, the most continuous and the only structured functional paganistics today and Abhinavagupta is its last, most profound exponent. It is up to the contemporary conscience to see that this culture is not erased through deliberately hostile physical vandalisms, neglect, apathy and/or ridicule.

The Indian paganistics is characterized by a total absence of intellectual othering and comparative norming. All positions are examined without hostility before stating one's position and no extra-intellectual forces are summoned to support or suppress a particular thought-system. In social and cultural practice, this has resulted in a rhizomic multiplicity and polyphony that is unfamiliar to the eyes and ears of the trained urbanism of the dominant ethos and leads invariably to an uncomfortably Protean analysis, problematics, and expert solution systems.

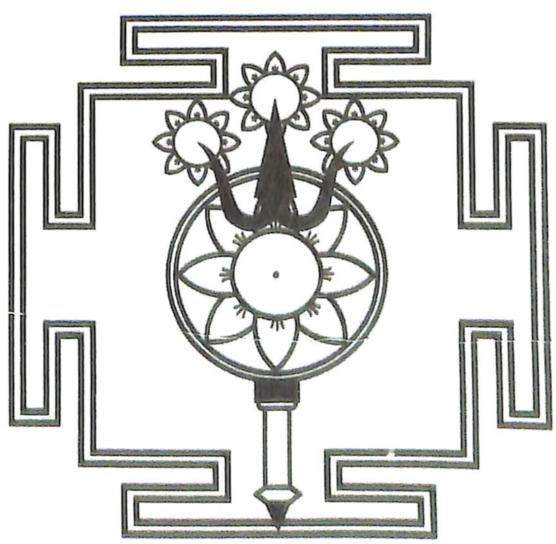
Abhinavagupta's works exemplify the Indian paganistics in a full-blown manner. His *svātantryavāda* (the Doctrine of Freedom) posits that the Universal Mind is inseparable from its Power of Freedom that enables him to exercise it and create the world as a reflection into himself except that the reflections in this case do not require an external entity. Thus each individual is a real miniature of this Universal Mind framed by the boundaries of space, time, and similar binders; it is the 'recognition' (*pratyabhijñā*) of the individual as the Universal Mind, the discovery of his/her identity with the Universal Mind, which is the key to his salvation. The social and cultural derivatives of this doctrine are obvious. Differences between persons, social systems, religious practices, various life forms etc., have to be looked at as differences between local rule-based systems with no meta-guarantees of truth favouring one over the other. In Indian poetics, where this doctrine has been the foundational principle, again under the influence of Abhinavagupta, this has resulted in an aesthetic theory free of the pulls of conformism and crypto-ethics which has been lurking beneath all the formulations of literary theory and art-appreciation from (the mediated) Aristotle to our own times.



Change of Historical Context and Waning of His Influence

After this great phase, there was a shrinking of this tradition, for external historical reasons among others, and the system declined along with other systems. Today there are not many followers of his doctrine, very few practitioners, and though he continues to be cited in highly restricted, no longer original, disputations among a very very small body of scholars, it may be said that as the last few surviving thinkers die, the system will truly become archaic. One of the last great scholars of Abhinavagupta, Swami Lakshman Joo, died in 1991 CE. The study of his texts is now limited to very few traditional institutes only.

Professor K.C. Pandey of Lucknow University had devoted his lifetime to the construction and study of Abhinavagupta's work and before his death in 1965 had, with his life's savings endowed The Centre for Abhinavagupta Studies – it is now practically dead as no one goes there to study.



Once the right path has been found

–Abhinavagupta

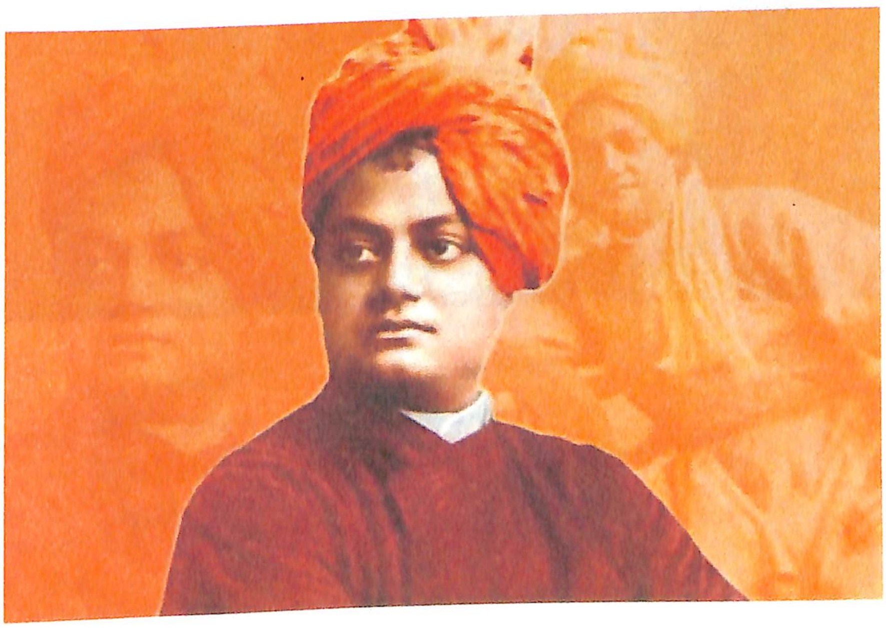
"When it has been already established by tradition,
Why these pretentious claims to originality?
When self-conscious thought blossoms so freely on its own,
Why bother to cram down these stifling canons?
With these two objections, ever so precious and within easy reach,
What's then left that the world has not turned to derision?
Climbing ever higher and higher, knowing no repose,
The intellect finally perceives the truth of things.
This is the reward of treading the rungs of discrimination,
The conceptual ladder built up by generations of forerunners.
Groping in so many directions and, indeed, without a firm foothold,
Such I say, is our first plunge into the ocean of certain knowledge.
Once the right path has been found and cleared, building bridges and
Founding entire cities, such architectural feats are no cause for wonder.
Therefore, far from having been overturned and demolished here,
The views of fellow truth – seekers have been merely refined.
In the blueprints bequeathed by our predecessors, we recognize
The foundations of this crowning achievement of our own labours!"

(Abhinavabhāratī)

Opinion

Swami Vivekananda on Abhinavagupta

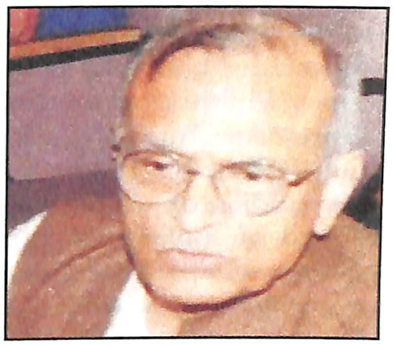
Abhinavagupta (975-1025 AD) is an ancient philosopher in India, who lived in the state of Kashmir during the end of the tenth and the beginning of eleventh centuries. He was a learned person with knowledge in both the Shaiva philosophy and Sanskrit literature. He is a Kashmiri theologian and aesthetician. He belonged to the Tantric Trika ritual cult. His philosophical works include commentaries on Utpaladev`a Ishvarapratyabhijna-karikas and the Malinivijayottara Tantra. He believed that other doctrinal systems are not to be treated as adversaries instead they should be considered as aspects of the self-expression of the supreme conscious reality. Abhinavagupta put forward a theory of absolute idealism. According to this theory the world derives from a single universal, autonomous and dynamic consciousness that expresses itself in an infinite variety of subjects, objects and acts of awareness. The seeker after release from rebirth is supposed to meditate upon the nature of consciousness, oscillating between the illumination of objects and reflective awareness. Abhinavagupta believed that the independence of mind is impossible. He has an argument against Buddhism too. He believes that the atman, the permanent background to experience, persists as a stable unity that synthesizes mental states. There would be only momentary, self-contained, unrelated mental episodes without such a principle. According to him ideas represent physical objects. Consciousness can only represent what is itself conscious.



Abhinavagupta took the way of direct communication for spreading his knowledge about the Shaiva philosophy and he took help of a number of teachers and saints of his contemporary time. This brought him the nickname, Sankaracharya of Kashmir. Abhinavagupta also became successful in possessing all the eight yogic powers that are explained in the Hindu Shastras and apart from that he also had a vast knowledge about the Six Signs that make someone in the category of god. This was the main reason why some of his descendants and the other people did consider him as the Shiva incarnate.

Abhinavagupta gave a new and his own definition of Karma and said that Karma actually deals with space and time and according to him actually there is no space. He was successful in making one thing clear and that is the state of God`s –consciousness. Abhinavagupta has also written some wonderful books to spread his philosophy and those books have also become well famous among the masses. Some of his most popular and famous works include the likes of Bhairavastotra, Vastika and also the Kramastotra.

Viewpoint



Re-accessing Abhinavagupta

Prof. Navjivan Rastogi

Some twenty-five years ago I wrote an article on the contribution of Kashmir to Indian Philosophy, thought and culture.[1] An effort was made, in that paper, to highlight the fact that the cultural history of India would ever remain incomplete if it fails to take into consideration the enormous contribution made by Kashmir in practically all areas of Indian culture and all realms of Indological studies.[2] Today when we sit again to reappraise the whole scenario we find Abhinavagupta emerging as the single most potential and creative factor in the centre of total Kashmirian contribution to the history of Indian metaphysical speculation and as one of the most potent sources of the Indian contribution to the world thought. Tradition has its own way of appraising such epoch making personalities. Abhinavagupta was hailed as an incarnation of Śeṣanāga[3], as Patañjali-incarnate[4], as a worldly embodiment of the Lord Dakṣiṇāmūrti i.e. Śiva[5], as the progeny of the parents established in the divine essence of Bhairava[6] (i.e., *Yoginībhū*), as the person initiated by his own deified awareness[7] and as a scholar whose name alone spelt authentic authoritativeness[8]. In fact, from all available data, Abhinavagupta was not his real name but a title earned by him from his teachers in recognition of his outstanding intellectual and spiritual accomplishments[9].

Abhinavagupta was hailed as an incarnation of Śeṣanāga, as Patañjali-incarnate, as a worldly embodiment of the Lord Dakṣiṇāmūrti i.e. Śiva, as the progeny of the parents established in the divine essence of Bhairava (i.e., *Yoginibhū*), as the person initiated by his own deified awareness and as a scholar whose name alone spelt authentic authoritativeness.

All these descriptions may however by dismissed by a modern student as being purely holistic and eulogistic in content. It will, therefore, be necessary for us to demonstrate the factum of these statements and in the process to re-discover and reassess the personality, contribution and contemporary meaningfulness of Abhinavagupta. It has become imperative for two reasons. There is one more reason for those who belong or shall belong to the University of Lucknow. I begin with the last one.

Few will believe that our acquaintance with Abhinavagupta is a very recent phenomenon of Indological history. With Bühler's Report on his tour in search of manuscripts, published in 1877, we came to know the name of some works by Abhinavagupta followed by a few publications by Nirṇaya Sagar Press of Bombay and the Research & Publication Department of the Kashmir Government between 1890 to 1911 and a lot more by the latter during 1912 to 1925. (It must be noted that Abhinavagupta's major works such as the *Dhvanyāloka-locana*, *Abhinavabhāratī*, several volumes of the *Tantrāloka* and *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā vivṛti-vimarśinī* still had not seen the light of day. Their publication went up to 1943). So our familiarity with Abhinavagupta remained superficial and skin deep throughout this period. During 1925-1935, however, an incident, replete with historical consequences, took place in the Lucknow University and a young scholar undertook study of Abhinavagupta and published the results of his sustained hard work in 1935 under the title *Abhinavagupta: An Historical and Philosophical Study*, unconsciously bringing the Department of Sanskrit, on the international platform and opening the floodgates of an Indological discipline of vast proportions and immense possibilities. This study was supplemented by the publication of the *Comparative Aesthetics* in two volumes during the subsequent decade extending the

horizons of our knowledge and deepening our understanding of Abhinavagupta's potential. This scholar was none else than Dr. K.C. Pandey who later founded Abhinavagupta Institute of Aesthetics and Śaiva Philosophy at Lucknow University after his retirement. Interesting as it may sound, towards the initial phase Dr. Pandey was joined by Prof. K.S. Iyer in his studies of Abhinavagupta. Both of them jointly edited an unknown commentary called *Bhāskarī* on Abhinavagupta's *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā vimarśinī.* It is a sheer coincidence that while we celebrated the centenary of Prof. Iyer last year, we are going to celebrate the centenary of this savant of Abhinavan thought in the coming year. This spells out our immediate concern for refurbishing our understanding of Abhinavagupta. In our considered opinion this will be the fittest tribute to this doyen of Abhinavan studies. Our second concern for reappraising Abhinavagupta is rooted in the general survey of the contemporary Indological scene the world over. During the last fifty years a gradual, but increasingly accelerated, shift is discernible in the focal areas of interest of transnational Indological scholarship – from Vedas, Linguistics and Philosophy to Buddhism, Tantras and Abhinavagupta. The last one occupies centre-stage because of the path shown by Pandey in the first place and because of the multinational craze to explore the unfathomed intellectual depths of Abhinavan thought in the second. In the stark contrast, back home, the studies on Abhinavgupta have slackened and classics like Pandey's *Abhinavagupta* and *Comparative Aesthetics,* Shankar Chaitanya Bharati's *Darśanasarvasva* and Kalidas Bhattacharya's *Gopinath Kavirāj's Thoughts–Towards a Systematic Study* are gradually, but conspicuously, becoming a rarity. The Lucknow University did produce a few good studies in the cognate areas but with the exit of second generation scholarship, this too is likely to wither away soon. It calls for an immediate in-depth analysis of the reasons for the creeping loss of interest in Abhinavagupta. One may be confronted with the mushrooming of literature on Abhinavagupta in India in order to belie the above contention, but a closer look does not fail to tear apart the deceptive veneer that covers the so-called studies. One reason may be that over these years we have failed to generate supportive tools and adequate ground work necessary for sustained deepening of our insight into Abhinavan thought.

As a philosopher, aesthetician, art-critic, dramaturgist, tantric, *sādhaka*, *yogin*, master of performing arts, metaphysician, devotee, researcher, historiographer, author, editor, commentator – all his pursuits are characterized by one common mission: they are palm-bearers of a unified essence.

Our third concern flows from the second. Besides Pandey at Lucknow, there were quite a few other centres of spirituo-academic activity totally dedicated to the pursuit of Abhinavan thought, namely Gopinath Kaviraj, Lakshman Joo, Jai Shankar Prasad, S.K. Das, Amrita Vāgbhava closely followed by R.K. Kaw, Jaidev Singh and B.N. Pandit. With the exit of all these scholars except the last one*, the serious studies on Abhinavagupta on the home front are almost extinct and there is every danger of loosing our moorings in the field of serious investigations in the area. Chances are that we might even loose our identity when viewed against the global backdrop. Because in the West as well as in the Far East, strong centres of deep academic interest synchronizing with the currents of neo-spiritualism have surfaced churning out first class studies on the different aspects of Abhinavan thought. France, Oxford, USA, Italy, Mexico, Japan *inter alia* have produced remarkable works in this special area. With the ever-growing appetite outside India for exploring Abhinavagupta more and more, our complacence may prove suicidal and self-effacing in a field which was pioneered and nurtured here. This explains urgent need for reappraising our academic priorities and reassessing the potential of Abhinavagupta.

By whatever method or in whatever way we may access Abhinavagupta – as a philosopher, aesthetician, art-critic, dramaturgist, tantric, *sādhaka, yogin,* master of performing arts, metaphysician, devotee, researcher, historiographer, author, editor, commentator – all his pursuits are characterized by one common mission: they are palm-bearers of a unified essence. He defines his vision as non-dualism *(advayavāda). Adavaya* to him means fullness, harmony and integrality *(pūrṇatā, sāmarasya* and *sāmastya).* Though conveying different connotations all the three terms stand for a single denotee clearly underlining the fact that the changing universe of discourse and the fleeting variety of the phenomena are nothing but the real manifestations of a single essence which for want of a better English equivalent may be rendered as self-referential awareness. The fullness, and for that matter, the harmony and the integrality lie in exploring the real identity between the phenomena and the ultimate

* Dr. B.N. Pandit has also since passed away. – Editor

unitary essence. This identity is realized not through the mechanism of a logically constructed superimposed entity but through the dynamism of the Reality's inherent agency. This unified essence, as a sequel, refuses to remain a mere simple unity but a unity, a unified essence, filled by a rich self-unfolding content. While this presentation describes Abhinavagupta's philosophy, it also sums up his personality because his personality is a living realization of his vision. His is a total yet constantly and consistently unfolding personal identity.

If this be a tenable assessment, the enigmatically multi-dimensional personality of Abhinavagupta must cease to baffle us. In its own characteristic manner analogy of a *puruṣa* (person) is quite often resorted to in Indian parlance to lend a semblance of life and to inject an element of wholeness into the idea by personifying the same. Like *kāvya-puruṣa* or *veda-puruṣa,* Abhinavagupta may be conceived as *prajñā-puruṣa* embodying the essential features of Sarasvatī and Naṭarāja fused into one. The very notion of *prajñā-puruṣa* symbolizes the attempt to visualize knowledge as a 'whole' *(avayavin)*, that is, to adopt an integrated approach to knowledge. Abhinavagupta's whole personality is thus structured as an encyclopaedic thinker who not only displays an encyclopaedic fervour in whatever he touches, but he in the process also emerges as a nodal point where almost all the streams of Indological studies tend to converge. Let us see how.

Abhinavagupta's first impression is that of a philosopher. Generally we know him as a first rate metaphysical thinker of the Kashmir Śaivism. The Kashmir Śaivism literally stands for all the off-shoots of Śaiva and Śākta speculation that grew or got matured in the Valley.

Abhinavagupta appears as the tallest intellectual figure of medieval India by virtue of his all-encompassing genius. Beginning on the basis of relatively more known facts, Abhinavagupta's first impression is that of a philosopher. Generally we know him as a first rate metaphysical thinker of the Kashmir Śaivism. The Kashmir Śaivism literally stands for all the off-shoots of Śaiva and Śākta speculation that grew or got matured in the valley. The modern usage of the term, however, has a slightly restrictive signification. The term now represents a sort of loose conglomerate of all monistic strands of thought pertaining to Śaiva-Śākta combine, the Pratyabhijñā and Trika Schools being the main and most popularly known systems. Remarkable as it may sound, Abhinavagupta contributes to both the segments. Under the second segment within the realm of *Pratyabhijñā* the two of the five core texts[10], namely the *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī* and *Īśvarapratyabhijñā-vivṛti-vimarśinī,* are from his pen. It is a matter of pity that till this day we have not been able to critically edit the text of the *Īśvarapratyabhijñā-vivṛti-vimarśinī* or translate the same in any language. It is a great scholastic work running over about 1200 finely printed pages and is comparable to the glosses of Vātsyayāna, Śabara or Śaṅkara in their respective systems in scholarship. In the Trika system his vernicular commentary called the *Mālinī-vijaya-vārtikā* on the *Mālinīvijayottara tantra,* the source text of the Trika system, is a path-setter text and has met with a similar fate. A critically edited text and its translation into any language has so far eluded us. In the realms of the Kula system his *Parātriśikāvivaraṇa* is a work of substantial merit. In the *Krama* system, though his major work *Kramakeli* is now lost to us due to vagaries of time, his minor works such as the *Kramastotra* have survived the atrocities of time. He is equally famous for his immense contribution to the fields of literary criticism and aesthetics. His celebrated *Locana* on the *Dhvanyāloka* is a landmark in the history of Sanskrit literary criticism in general and in the history of *Dhvani* school in particular. What is important, Abhinavagupta establishes an inner chord between literary criticism and aesthetics. His illustrious commentary *Abhinavabhāratī* on Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* is a work of monumental value seminal to our current insight into the Indian aesthetics. We must be grateful to Ramchandra Kavi who has afforded to us an edited text of *Abhinavabhāratī.* The four volumes of this enormous text comprise about 2000 pages. Again the irony is that this work too needs critical edition and an authentic translation. Except a few sporadic efforts towards editing the *Abhinavabhāratī* pertaining to the *Rasa-sūtra*, we are ill equipped to grapple with this gigantic text. While commenting upon the *Nāṭyaśāstra,* which is patently a text on dramaturgy, Abhinavagupta attempts a subtle transition from dramaturgy to aesthetics eliciting support from his master Bharata himself who views drama as the primary art-form and the other art-forms such as music, dance, sculpture and architecture being subordinate. Besides, by strongly substantiating the role of *vyañjanā* as a vehicle of transmission of art-experience in the *Locana* and by advocating the immediacy of art-experience being common to poetry and drama, he demolishes the divider between poetry and drama and

this paves his way for smooth and purposeful foray into the realm of fine arts. In the field of Tantra perhaps there is none to match his standing in the entire history. His magnum opus *Tantrāloka*, which along with Jayaratha's commentary *Viveka* covers about 12 volumes extending over 3500 pages, is a text of matchless genre. Though purporting to be a commentary on the *Mālinīvijayottara-tantra* the work remains thoroughly original in content, design and treatment. The work by itself is an enclyclopaedia of the tantric literature, ritual and praxis. This work too, though translated into Italian by Gnoli and into Hindi by Paramahans Mishra, needs a critico-textually edited text. I want to put this point across with a sense of added responsibility because of my personal association with the text by way of bringing out an enlarged edition and also attempting a sizeable introductory study. This text was later summarised by Abhinavagupta himself into various growingly smaller avataras e.g., *Tantrasāra, Tantroccaya* and *Tantravaṭadhānikā*. Toeing the traditional Indian line, Abhinavagupta is not satisfied with his forays into the realm of knowledge and spirituality *(jñāna)*, he is equally determined to make deep strides in the paths of devotion *(bhakti)* and action *(kriyā/yoga)*. While he views all his works as constituting homage to the Divine *(stuti)* he has written several devotional poems *(stotras)*[11] as well, in which he pours his heart underscoring his roots in the tradition presided over by Bhaṭṭa Nārāyāṇa and his own grand teacher Utapala. Despite the descent of any specific text on yoga from his pen till date, it does not deter us from having a peep into his unique brand of yoga. His deep insight into *ānanda-yoga,* a term coined by him to mark his own approach, is abundantly noticeable in the *Mālinīvijaya-vārtikā, Tantrāloka* and *Parātriśikā-vivaraṇa*. In addition, Abhinavagupta distinguishes himself from the general tenor of Indian philosophers. Here he finds himself in the coveted company of a great philosopher like Bhartṛhari. While the whole of Indian philosophy treats reality as 'meaning' *(artha)* or 'meaning of word' *(padārtha),* the entire monistic Śaiva tradition of Kashmir perceives reality as 'word' *(śabda)* also. To be accurate, reality is a synthesis of word and meaning both. Abhinavagupta differs from Bhartṛhari in the sense that the latter views the meaning as an evolute of the Word-principle. A substantial block of the Mīmāṁsists too propounds the philosophy of language taking the meaning as *a priori* anticipation of facts represented by the pure word. While Abhinavagupta agrees with the Mīmāṁsaka stand, he finds pure word identical with pure awareness unlike the Mīmāṁsaka. Thus, according to Abhinavagupta, objects and images are not contingent, they are self-concretizations of the pure word. Thus the linguistic evolution, like its parallel objective evolution, is a real symbol of creative process. Abhinavagupta's linguistic thesis projects him as a philosopher of language par excellence and lays bare the subtle inner linkage obtaining between his theories of word, meaning and conveyance of art-experience.

Not only the mammoth canvas betrays the extent of his encyclopaedic mind, his treatment of the subject matter too reveals the encyclopaedic functioning of his intellect. As seen above, Abhinavan genius is integral. In fact it is not just integral, it is 'integrating' also. To him, all the different disciplines he has worked on are various expressions of an underlying common essence. As he has emphatically demonstrated in the case of the *Tantrāloka*, he views all his works – be it a work on literary criticism or a treatise on philosophy, a devotional poem or a manual of tantra – share identical structural pattern. All the texts, are designed as a compendium *(saṁgraha-grantha),* a procedure manual *(prakriyā-grantha),* a systemal text *(śāstra-grantha)* and a devotional work *(stuti-grantha)*. This fact is amply borne out by the benedictory and concluding verses of the respective works. By embracing such a structural organization he procures and preserves all the relevant information pertaining to ideas, literature and practices, followed by their organization into a systematic framework propounding the methodology to be adhered to and thereby spiritually sublimating everything as an offering to the Divine. A level below the structural fundamentalism is the next level of textual integration. For example the study of the *Tantrāloka* as an individual text is not advocated by Abhinavagupta. He visualizes the *Mālinīvijaya-vārtikā, Tantrāloka* and *Parātriṁśikāvivaraṇa* as forming a consistent whole and urges the reader to approach them as complementary texts. Similarly he perceives a logical integration between the *Locana* and the *Abhinavabhāratī* on the one hand and between the *Īśvarapratyabhijñā-vimarśinī* and the *Vivṛti-vimarśinī* on the other and then integrating the two sets from two separate disciplines, he prepares the ground for integration at a larger and higher scale. A subsequent level of integration is seen within the schematization of the subject matter of a given text. This process is visibly at work in all the major texts such as the *Tantrāloka,* the *Īśvarapratyabhijñā-vimarśinī,* the *Vivṛti-vimarśinī* and the *Abhinavabhāratī*. In all these texts Abhinavagupta aims to integrate vertically as well as horizontally. In the *Tantrāloka* by introducing the twin notions of the *tantra-prakriyā* and *kula-prakriyā* and by subsuming all the systems under them and by interacting the two classes of systems he vertically integrates all the monistic Śaiva systems on the one hand and on the other he integrates all the Śaiva systems of non-monistic shade also as emanating from *Trayambaka* and non-*Trayambaka maṭhikās* and as constituting a single progressively

assimilative channel. He is then able to produce a comprehensive manual on all the tantric systems placing them in a logically cohesive sequence. In the *Abhinavabhāratī* he unearths a logically ordered whole of all the theories of *rasa* as an experience as well as an object and all the forms and variants of other art-forms and traditions and puts up a virtual store house of all previous as well as prevalent theories and practices at our disposal. In the *Īśvarapratyabhijñā-vimarśinī* and *Īśvarapratyabhijñā-vivṛti-vimarśinī* his integrating faculty wears a different mantle. Here he is ranked amongst the systematizers or system-builders, portrayed as तर्कस्य कर्तारः by Jayaratha, like Somananda and Utpala. Here he not only integrates but rationalizes, systematizes and reconstructs the loose ends into a well orchestrated cogent system of thought. It is Utpala, Abhinavagupt's grand teacher, who introduces the four-fold division of the *Pratyabhijñā-Karikās* and integrates knowledge, action and āgama as belonging to the Supreme Subjectivity and discovers the principle of recognition as operating through each of them. Each cognitive variant and functional diversity of the subject is nothing but a recognitive mode of self-discovery. Thus *rasa*-experience is nothing but a recognitive mode of self-discovery through art. Meaning is nothing but a recognitive mode of self-discovery through word. The list is endless.

Few would know, fewer would believe, that Abhinavagupta impacts us as an excellent musician. We do know that he was a philosopher of music. His treatment of the complexities of music, both vocal and instrumental as well as systemal found in the *Tantrāloka*, *Abhinavabhāratī* and *Īśvarapratyabhijñā-vivṛti-vimarśinī*, presents a scientific as well as a philosophical account of music.

There is one more dimension to his encyclopaedic vision. It is the historical genius and keen historical sense that is evident in all the works of Abhinavagupta. The Indian notion of beginningless time and endless worldly cycle *(anādi* and *ananta)* happens to be a great deterrent of any historical activity in the modern sense of measurable time. Thus the rise of Kalhaṇa should be viewed as an exception not as a rule. Against this backdrop Abhinavagupta indulges in a real historical activity. He dates at least his three works in precise terms of date, month and year. Goudriaan treats Abhinavagupta as one of the three concrete sources for dating the tantric texts. Abhinavagupta's historical sense transcends beyond this. He furnishes valuable information about his ancestral and preceptorial lineages. Everywhere he tries to point out and, if feasible, to restore the missing links in the tradition. It is possible to conclusively show that Abhinavagupta utilizes the entire pre-Abhinavan source material and imparts to it a chronological order. Modern researches have authenticated the vast material in manuscripts used by Abhinavagupta while writing his *Tantrāloka.* A study into the source-material of the *Tantrāloka* offers a very fascinating scope for future research. Exactly a similar phenomenon one comes across in the *Abhinavabhāratī,* where Abhinavagupta undertakes a stupendous task of collecting textbooks, technical data, forms, variants and modes of literary, dramatic and other performing arts. As a glaring and popular example, the *Abhinavabhāratī* remains till this day our only source of knowledge on various theories and theorists of *Rasa.* Abhinavagupta's works offer an extremely rich source for various aspects of Indian cultural history. The *Tantrāloka* and *Īśvarapratyabhijñā-vivṛti-vimarāinī* are replete with several informations on Buddhism, Tāntric Buddhism and other systems of Indian philosophy, which are now extinct in their own respective systems. For example, the sixteenth *Āhnika* of the *Tantrāloka* contains valuable information on *kālacakra* and the *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vivṛti-vimarśinī* refers to and quotes from a subsect of Buddhists called *Dharmottarīya,* about which little is known from Buddhist sources.

Bound with this is Abhinavagupta's role as an editor and an exemplary research scholar in the modern sense of the term. He subjects his data to most vigorous historical, theoretical, chronological and logical scrutiny before utilizing the material. Abhinavagupta shares his problems and difficulties while negotiating his source text. He takes his reader into confidence about the precise norms of the methodology used by him. He throws copious hints to show that many texts had corrupt readings and several texts were incomprehensible and as such he had to edit them before he was able to use them. Utility, relevance, authenticity and consistency are his proclaimed norms which he scruplously adheres to. When he finds his source texts silent, he seeks guidance from the cognate texts from the allied fields, even when he does not subscribe to them.

Few would know, fewer would believe, that Abhinavagupta impacts us as an excellent musician. We do know that he was a philosopher of music. His treatment of the complexities of music, both vocal and instrumental as well as systemal found in the *Tantrāloka*, *Abhinavabhāratī* and *Īśvarapratyabhijñā-vivṛti-vimarśinī*, presents a scientific as well as a philosophical account of music. The merit of Abhinavagupta lies in one more

aspect that his *Abhinavabhāratī* also comes up as an additional and complimentary source of exposition of Bharata's contemporary or successor, Dattila, a great exponent of Gāndharva music. What is more remarkable is that he is a great performing artist and ranks at par with Nārada, Udayana and Tumbura in the tradition. In a pen-picture drawn by his contemporary and a senior pupil, Madhurāja Yogin, he is portrayed as playing on *nāda-vīṇā*[12].

He also impresses as a creative and thoughtful art critic. The way he subjects various poems to critical analysis in the *Locana, Abhinavabhāratī* and the fine nuances he brings to bear upon his critical appreciation are landmark in the field of practical literary criticism. Attention may specially be drawn to his critical analysis of a few verses from Kālidāsa[13] during the course of his build-up of the metapsychology of *rasa* and creative art process involved in the intuitive experience of a connoisseur of art *(sahṛdaya)* that is remarkable for its depth, range and originality and is sure to stay as a model of innovative practical art criticism.

Abhinavagupta defies his categorization among the known classes of Indian philosophers. Philosophy in general is supposed to be a system of thought which offers a rational explanation of the apparent intricacies confronted by us in our understanding of the phenomenal world and also how it paves way for the spiritual realization. Theories of knowledge, reality, relation and value etc. are the natural offshoots of the metaphysical reasoning. But to Abhinavagupta, philosophy is much more than a more speculative thought, its commitment to life as we live it is deeper and therefore it must be applied to explain those areas also. From metaphysics he transgresses into applied metaphysics. He is the only thinker of his kind who applies his philosophical thesis to the realms of art-experience, dramatic presentation, tantric praxis, yogic transcendental realization of the self and mundane sensual ecstacy specially marking the sex-experience viewing them all as the various expressions of the ultimate self-experience, their mutual difference being caused by the specifics of the medium or the instrument employed.

Abhinavagupta as a part of his two-way strategy utilizes these varied experiences as exemplifying and substantiating his metaphysical theses. These constitute a sort of argumentation and support systems establishing the authenticity, validity, tenability and intelligibility of his theories bridging the seeming gulf between the existential, the experiential and the spiritual on the one hand and between the worldly and transworldly on the other. Thus while his metaphysics of recognition offers a most cogent known Indian explanation of the aesthetic experience, the art-experience brings the immediacy of transworldly intuitive realization within our reach. According to Abhinavagupta, the art or aesthetic-experience is a selfrecognitive experience, which reflects fullness of joy because of its freedom from the conditionalities of medium, time and space. In plain words it is an aesthetic rehearsal of spiritual self-recognition. This recognitive art-experience is communicated and thereby re-created in the aesthete by employing the suggestive power of language. It should be clear that power of suggestion as developed by Abhinavagupta can be described as a theory of transcendental recognition. Like Bhartṛhari, Abhinavagupta's understanding of the revelatory unity of reference allows us to the higher level of language through *pratibhā* and communication is successfully effected through its revelation *(sphoṭa/dhvani)*. Abhinavagupta's description of the Supreme Word *(Parāvāc)* as the absolutic self-recognition *(ahampratyavamarśa)* makes it essential to the very structure of experience and thereby again removes the gap between experience and expression *(rasānubhūti* and *rasābhivyakti)*. One cannot miss that the process of *rasa-niṣpatti* as being concomitant to *rasanā (vyañjanā)* offers the poetic epistemological argument in support of Abhinavagupta's philosophy of language whereby the self is both revealed and enjoyed. Amongst all art forms Abhinavagupta accords the highest status to drama because of the analogical character of the absolutic enactment of the world and the actor's enactment of a character in a drama. Śiva is portrayed as a cosmic actor *(naṭa/śailūṣa)* and the cosmic arena as a huge dramatic stage where, by assuming roles of individual subjects, He enacts the world-drama and after conclusion gives up the assumed identity and reverts to Himself. Thus the myth of the Absolutic descent and return to its original being is symbolised by the dramatic art-form where the actor, under the assumed identity, becomes a part of the dramatic action and reverts to himself when the drama is over. There is a subtler similarity too. The actor by identifying himself with the focus of dramatic situation, even though enacting an assumed character, experiences the aesthetic relish due to intuitive self-realization resulting from the process of universalization *(sādhāraṇīkaraṇa)*. The Absolute too, likewise, even while discharging the worldly role, has a beatific self-experience due to self-recognitive universalization. By substituting dramatic art with ritual and praxis, Abhinavagupta extends application of his theology to the field of tantras. Abhinava attempts philosophical rationalization of the Śaiva monist's central soteriological doctrine of the Absolutic agency symbolically internalized by tantric praxis and rituals

(kriyā, caryā) duly reinforced by his assertion that he himself was conceived in a tantric ritual. In the Kashmir Śaivist terminology Śiva is conceived as the supreme agent *(kartā)* and everything else is his agency or act *(kriyā)*. The tantric phraseology replaces it by the paradigm of the 'powerful' and the 'power' *(śaktimān* and *śakti)*. The world is nothing but the self-actualization of the *śaktimān* through its own agency in the phase of expansion (which is also a literal meaning of the term *'tantra')* and reabsorption of the world within self by deactivating the agency. The plethora of tantric practices and rituals are the tantric enunciation of the divine functionalism by undertaking which the Godhead unfolds and enfolds Himself. The situation bears close analogy to the aforesaid dramatic performance. We reach this tantric unity of Śiva and Śakti by another route also. The overall pattern of the spiritual practices corresponding to the broad tantric mythical structure is the recourse to the sexual rituals, physically and alternatively by mental visualization, to manifest or reintegrate "the cosmogonic sexual unity of Śiva and Śakti."[14] The fundamental thrust of the argument consists in the adept's achieving complete identification with Śiva in the enjoyment of the world as Śakti, both as his 'power' as well as 'consort'. The various rites comprising *caryākrama, rahasyaprakriyā* or *ādiyāga* (primal rite) are typical examples of such tantric praxis. The homology between the dramatic experience and the tantric experience of the self lies in the role of Śakti or agency which consists in self-referential integration or self-recognitive awareness where connoisseur of art *(sahṛdaya)* or the actor *(naṭa/anukartā)* is akin to Śiva and his experiencing capacity to *pratibhā* or intuitive power *(śakti)* which is nothing but the self-referential awareness. In this extended sense the sexual experience includes all the sensual experiences, their self-sublimating or self-refining potential being constituted by Śakti or power. Thus intrinsic nature of aesthetic, sexual or sensual experiences are homologous to and practically approximate to the monistic Śaiva soteriological realization.

The world is nothing but the self-actualization of the *śaktimān* through its own agency in the phase of expansion (which is also a literal meaning of the term *'tantra')* and reabsorption of the world within self by deactivating the agency.

The greatest feature of Abhinavan contribution lies not in his extreme originality, nor in his capacity to rise way above the past tradition or break with the tradition, but in his contemporaenity and futuristic potential towards opening up new vista for Indian thinking. While taking stock of the social margins of the Abhinavan thought vis-à-vis contemporary content and futuristic expectations our attention is arrested by five important features of his approach:

a) Out of the two basic strands of Indian thought – analytical (*adhyavasāyātmaka*) and synthetical *(anusaṁdhānātmaka)* – Abhinavagupta sides with the latter. The process of analysis implies an excluvist *(vyāvṛttimūlaka)* or negative approach towards life, devaluing its value, opting for cognition which is based on 'pick and choose' selectivity and dividing society in compartments of language, caste, creed and gender. As against this the process of synthesis is based on life-affirmation, recognizing life as a value, embracing recognition on unilocality of time and space and advocating inclusivism *(anuvṛtti)* rejecting artificial pigeon-holes of humanity created by caste, creed, gender and language. According to Abhinavagupta those who subscribe or sympathize with the social fragmentation are bent upon insulting the Divine and are prone to make themselves laughing stock.[15] This idea of Abhinavagupta is buttressed from another source of his. His meta-psychological enunciation of the process of universalization *(sādhāraṇīkaraṇa)* in the artistic consummation is a bold statement of such a radical reasoning.

b) Abhinavagupta's life-embracing approach is a direct outflow from his doctrine of totality and complete integration *(pūrṇatā/sāmarasya)* which is reflected in the eclectically value-structuring and acceptance of all finite truths as human truths. This is indicative of Abhinavagupta's fundamental belief in the possibility of countless modes of the ultimate Reality's manifestation. Abhinavagupta's direct student, Kṣemarāja, gives an exquisite vent to it in his famous aphorism.[16]

c) Abhinavagupta joins the main stream tantricism in projecting 'power', as the special theme of the tantric myth, symbolism and practice. The entire tantric ritual mechanism is geared to realize this 'power'. Through ideological rationalization, the sole direction of the cognitive activity, which is recognitive *per se*, is said to discover/rediscover this power[17] and that of agential activity *(kartṛtā)* is to actualize this 'power' at the level of experience. By valuation of power over other

considerations in our thought and conduct both, a stage is set to elevate human independence or self-instrumentality towards energizing inherent potential.

d) Abhinavagupta's equation of microcosm with the macrocosm, of *yogin* with Parama Śiva, of the individual consciousness with the universal consciousness is obviously aimed at viewing the man as an end in himself and thereby paving the way for exploring the ultimate possibilities of his growth.

e) Abhinavagupta views the mundane as an extension of the transmundane or the Divine. His total being is fully disposed towards discovering a deep mutual level of dependence between the objects. This proclivity consists in innate realization of the basic unity inherent in the diversity. Abhinavagupta has repeatedly declared that this world of discourse marked by unity-in diversity carves out the gateway to spiritual awakening.[18]

Laced with the foregoing overview of Abhinavan theology and its quintessential premises, a modern student of Abhinavagupta will instantly catch hold of a fertile ground in Abhinavagupta towards reconstructing a new system of Indian thought whose immediate central concern will be to transgress the artificial barriers eroding the social cohesion, to uphold the cause of 'power' as a real tool of exercising one's agential freedom, to offer a congenial atmosphere for achieving ongoing divination of man and, in the sum total, for attaining a joyous existence as the celebration of life.

Before winding up attention must be drawn towards political significance of no mean order of Abhinavan contribution. Kashmir constitutes a burning test of our secular credentials . If we fail to retain Kashmir, we loose the battle of secular Indian polity. The best of Kashmir is embodied in and represented by Abhinavagupta. As the tradition has it, his birth in Kashmir was by his own compassionate choice.[19] It is, therefore, our sacred duty not to allow Abhinavagupta to die in the land of his birth. With the foregoing statement of rationale, I invite the scholarly world to re-access and reassess Abhinavagupta for answering our basic concerns of cultural identity, secular commitment, nodal centrality of Indological persuits and divining a fresh socio-philosophical thinking with contemporary humanistic ethos.

The detail introduction of the author is on the page 135

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1 Paper entitled *Contribution of Kashmir to Philosophy, Thought & Culture* read at the International Sanskrit Conference, New Delhi, 1972, Proceedings, Vol. 1, Part I, pp. 258-266. Later published in ABORI, Vol. LVI, 1975.

2 In people's mind, down the passage of history, Kashmir was perceived as the citadel of the Goddess of Learning and a testing ground of the persons claiming to be the scholars. As Jayaratha rightly observes in one of the closing verses of his *Tantrāloka-viveka* (verse No. 4):
युक्ता बोधप्रधाना स्थितनिजमहसा चारदा पीठदेवी ।
विद्यापीठे प्रथीयः प्रथितनिखिलवाग्यत्र काश्मीरनाम्नि ।।

3 *Abhinavagupta: An Historical and Philosophical Study*, P. 10-11 4 Ibid.

5 श्रीमान्नः पातु साक्षादभिनवपुङ्गा दक्षिणामूर्तिदेवः । *Gurunāthaparāmarśa*, verse No. 4

6 तादृङ्मेलककलिकाकलिततनुः कोऽपि यो भवेद्गर्भे ।।
उक्तः स योगिनीभूः स्वयमेव ज्ञानभाजनं रुद्रः ।
Tantrāloka 29.162-63 Also see *Tantrāloka-viveka*, VIII, p. 137

7 अभिषिक्तः स्वसंवित्तिदेवीभिर्दीक्षितश्च सः । *Tantrāloka*- 4.42-43

8 अभिनवगुप्तस्य इति सकललोकप्रसिद्धनामोदीरणेनापि आप्तत्वमेव उपोदवलितम् । *Tantraloka-viveka*, Vol. I, p. 34

9 अभिनवगुप्तस्य कृतिः सेयं यस्योदिता गुरुभिराख्या ।
त्रिनयनचरणसरोरुहचिन्तनलब्धप्रसिद्धिरिति । *Tantrāloka*, 1.202

10 सूत्रं वृत्तिर्विवृत्तिर्लघ्वी बृहतीत्युभे विमर्शिन्यौ ।
प्रकरणविवरणपणकमितिशास्त्रं प्रत्यभिज्ञायाः ।।
- *Sarva-darśana saṁgraha* (chapter on *Pratyabhijñā*), p. 349

11 A study of these *stotras* and other minor devotional works was done by me way back in 1959 while presenting a dissertation for my postgraduate degree. Later Lilian Silburn also published a work on these in France.

12 वामश्रीपाणिपद्मस्फुरितनखमुखैर्वादयन्नादवीणाम् । - *Gurunāthaparāmarśa*, verse No. 4

13 ग्रीवाभणभिरामं मुहुरनुपतति स्यन्दने बद्धदृष्टिः........ । - *Abhijñāna śākuntalam* 1.7
रम्याणि वीक्ष्य मधुरांश्च निशम्य चब्दान् - ibid, 5.2
हरस्तु किणित्परिलुप्तधैर्यः चन्द्रोदयारम्भ इवाम्बुराशेः । - *Kumāra-sambhavam* 3.67

14 *Arguments and the Recognition of Śiva*, David Peter Lawrence, p. 38

15 तेहि भगवतः सर्वानुग्राहिकां चक्तिं मितविङ्गयतया खण्डयन्तः तथा परमेश्वरस्य परमकृपालुत्वमसहमानाः, भगवत्तत्त्वे भेदलिण बलादेवानयन्तः, मात्सर्यावहित्थलज्जाजिह्मीकृतावाङ्मुखदृष्ट्य इति हास्यरसविङ्गयभावम् आत्मनि आरोपयन्ति इति ।
-*Bhagvadgitārthaśaṁgraha* on *Gīta* 9.35

16 तद्भूमिकाः सर्वदर्शनस्थितयः । - *Pratyabhijñā-hṛdayam*, Sūtra 8

17 स्वशक्त्याविष्करणेनेयं प्रत्यभिज्ञोपदर्श्यते । - *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-kārika* 1.1

18 सर्वथा तावदत्र प्रमेये भगवत एव भेदने च अभेदने च स्वातन्त्र्यं घटगताभासभेदाभेददृष्टिरेव परमार्थाद्वयदृष्टिप्रवेशे उपायः समवलम्बनीयः, न तु व्यवहारोऽपि अयं परमेश्वरस्वरूपानुप्रवेशविरोधी ।
-*Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vimarśini*, II, p. 129

19 श्रीकण्ठेशावतारः परमकरुणया प्राप्तकाश्मीरदेशः । - *Gurunāthaparāmarśa*, verse No. 4

Dramaturgy



Abhinavaguptapāda on Bharata's Rasa Theory

Prof. Kapil Kapoor

Abhinavaguptapāda (11th century AD), is an extraordinary philosopher, aesthetician and literary theorist. His two commentaries, *Abhinavabhāratī* (on *Nāṭyaśāstra*) and *Locana* (on *Dhvanyāloka*) are so necessary for an understanding of the original texts that they are considered as extensions of the original texts and are invariably mentioned along with them in the tradition. Abhinavagupta composed 40 *granthas* pertaining to Śaivism, *tantra, nāṭya* and *sāhitya*[1]. Abhinavagupta, it could be said, mastered all the learning in the tradition, expressed its core in his works and left a testing influence on the subsequent traditions of thought.

Three of his works deal with philosophy and two with literature, *sāhitya* and the rest with *tantra*. In *sāhitya*, he explained and clarified many issues (i) in Ānandavardhana's theory of suggestion, *dhvani,* (in *Dhvanyālokalocana*), (ii) in Bharata's *rasa-siddhānta*, literary aesthetics, (in *Abhinavabhāratī*, and the issue of (iii) interdependence of object and image in any mental construct and in all art-representation.

In particular, it has, since then, not been found possible to qualify or amend his constitution and explication of Bharata's *rasa*-theory in *Abhinavabhāratī* in terms of nature, grasp and effect of the literary art experience. He also extended the application of *rasa*-theory beyond *nāṭya* to cover all *kāvya* (literary compositions). *Abhinavabhāratī* like most classical Indian intellectual texts is composed in the manner of a dialogue presenting three points of view – (i) of Bharata, the original proponent of *rasa* theory, (ii) of the pre-Abhinavagupta commentators such as Śaṅkuka, Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa, Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka, an unnamed Sāṁkhya thinker and unspecified 'other scholars', and (iii) '*upādhyāya*', Abhinavagupta's teacher and Abhinavagupta himself. His discourse is dialectical including as it does, for each issue or topic, any or all of the following steps:

i. quote one or more Bharata *kārikā(s)*,
ii. paraphrase the *kārikā(s)* / spell out the issue(s) therein,
iii. state what the earlier thinkers, *pūrvācaryas,* have understood from the *kārikā* and said about it and also state where and how he disagrees with them,
iv. give arguments in support of his disagreement pointing out fallacies in the earlier thinking and providing further facts and reasons that establish the validity of his position,
v. give examples from known literary texts to exemplify his position,
vi. give further arguments,
vii. restate his position as the conclusion.

In *Abhinavabhāratī*, in the commentary on chapter 6, the *rasa* chapter, of *Nāṭyaśāstra*, expounding the first expository *kārikā*, the *kārikā* 10, Abhinavagupta clarifies that the eleven elements of drama[2], listed by Bharata, are in fact a re-statement of the earlier dramaturgist Kohala's view. In Bharata's view, strictly speaking, three kinds of enactment, of the body, of

1 They are - *Bodhapañcadaśikā, Parātrīṁśikā-vivaraṇa, Mālinīvijayavārtika. Tantrāloka, Tantrasāra, Tantravaṭadhānikā, Dhvanyālokalocana, Abhinavabhāratī, Bhagvadgītārthasaṁgraha, Paramārthasāra, Īśvara- pratyabhijñā-vimarśinī, Īśvara- pratyabhijñā-vivṛtti-vimarśinī.* These are published. The next eight short compositions are published as Annexure to Dr. Kantichandra Pandey's researched-book on Abhinavagupta. Four of these are *Stotras* (hymnal texts) – *Kramastotra, Bhairavastotra, Dehasthadevatācakrastotra, Anubhavanivedana* (all in only 59 *ślokas*). The other four expository but equally brief texts are – *Anutatrāṣṭikā, Paramārtha Dvādaśikā, Parmārtha Carcā, Mahopadedeśaviṁśatikam* (all in 49 *ślokas*). There are two texts that according to some scholars could have been composed by someone other than Abhinavagupta. They are – *Tantrasamuccaya* and *Ghaṭakarparakulakavivṛti.* The next thirteen are not available now but are referred to by Abhinavagupta himself in his work. They are – *Kramakeli. Śivadṛṣṭyālocana, Pūrvapañcikā, Padārthapraveśanirṇayaṭīkā, Prakīrṇakavivarṇa, Prakaraṇavivarṇa, Kāvyakautukavivarṇa, Kathāmukhatilakam, Laghvīprakriyā, Bhedavadavivarṇa, Devīstotravivarṇa, Tattvādhvaprakāśikā, Śivaśaktyavinābhāvastotra.* Six of his works are referred to in comparatively recent enumerations. They are - *Bimbapritibimbavāda, Anuttaratattvavimarśinī Vṛtti, Nāṭyālocana, Paramārthasaṁgraha, Anuttaraśataka.*

2 *Rasa, bhāva, abhinaya, dharmī, vṛtti, pravṛtti, siddhi, svara, vādya, gāna* and *śṛṅgāra* – *N.S.*6.10.

language and of the objects and songs and music (instruments) are the five parts of *nāṭya,* drama. With this clarification, Abhinavagupta is drawing attention to the distinction that Bharata makes between drama as a theatre and drama as a totality of composition that includes the reading-experience. But Bharata in his exposition of dramaturgy accepts Kohala's view and follows the given order of elements and therefore begins his exposition by first taking up *rasa* and in *kārikā* 15 enumerates the eight *rasa*[3].

In his explanatory comment on this *kārikā*, Abhinavagupta first defines the *rasa*-experience:

"The meaning/object perceptible through enactment by a *naṭa* (performer/action), illumined / constituted in plays (*nāṭaka*) and poems (*kāvya*) that is experienced through the non-distracted state of a one-pointed mind is called *nāṭya*. This *nāṭya* though endlessly variable and different because of variable performers and endless *vibhāvas* (causal, contextual factors), yet because it is experienced as existing in objects, in the performer/experiencer in the narrative and as all performers/experiencers merge in the primary performer/experiencer, the protagonist, this perceptible meaning/object is the form that the constituted self of the protagonist finally takes in the narrative, *sthāyibhāvātmaka cittavṛtti svarūpa*, the self form of the durable state of being constituted in the protagonist.

"And this state of being, the cognitive state of the protagonist,

- constituted by and achieving beauty through songs, folk and other, dance and music,
- reinforced by the literary excellence and the influence of the tradition of enactment, freed from the particularity of self and other,
- getting generalized and including/incorporating within itself the state of the viewers/participants (*sāmājika*),
- established as the unified cognitive state of the protagonist and the viewers/ auditors, an extra-ordinary natural state,
- not the product of known epistemologies as inference, verbal testimony or extra-ordinary perception,
- experienced as different from a worldly cognitive state and as beyond the known-knower structure,
- not appearing to be the product of its immediate substitution either,
- unable, unlike the worldly cognitive states, to produce further allied states,
- and graspable, therefore as a process that is known as the tasting/experiencing of uninterrupted deep peace (*viśrānti*)

is referred to by the word *rasa*.

"So *rasa* is *nāṭya* (meaning) and its experience is the fruit (of art)"

This is a very carefully worded statement about art-experience and needs to be meditated upon. In *nāṭya* and in *kāvya*, all the performers' different experiences constituted by all the variable elements of enactment merge to create an integrated state of being in the protagonist. The auditor recognizes this state of being of the protagonist, experiences it through the process of generalization (*sādhārnīkaraṇa*) that de-particularises the experience, frees this experience of here and now and de-links it from the self and the other. Thus a state of being that is *shown to obtain* in the *naṭā* is cognized as an abstract experience by the auditor. The auditor's epistemology is not the routine epistemology. It is neither inference, nor verbal testimony, nor extra-ordinary perception. This experience being 'present' only to the self of the auditor (*sākśātakārātmaka*), it is essentially non-perceptible. It evolves in the consciousness of the auditor and finally one dominant rasa, one unified aesthetic experience, results from innumerable causal factors. This primary *rasa* (*mahārasa*) is compared by Abhinavagupta with Bhartṛhari's *sphoṭa*[4], just as the sequential, segmented and hierarchical linguistic elements – sounds, bases, affixes and words – are grasped as an integrated, undifferentiated entity of meaning, *rasa* too, varied and born of diverse sources and expressed in so many expressers, is a single integrated *rasa* and the other subordinate *rasas* have the same status as the parts (*avyava*) of a sentence or utterance. The two competing theories of sentence comprehension, *Abhihitānvayavāda* of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa and *Anvitābhidhānavāda* of Prabhākara Mishra are also cited to show that all subsidiary *rasas* together constitute the one primary experience, even though the auditors remain aware of their separate identities[5]. This primary *rasa*, *mahārasa*, is as *sphoṭa*, what is

3 *Śṛṅgāra, hāsya, karuṇa, raudra, vīra, bhayānaka, vībhatsa* and *adbhuta*.
4 See, *Vākyapadīya, kāṇḍa* I, *kārikā* 44-126.
5 As Bhartṛhari indicates, in the figure 123, we remain aware of 1, 2 and 3separately yet '123' has an integrated denotation that transcends their individual denotations. Modern Gestalt Theory has affinity with this postulate.

grasped and comprehended, and the subsidiary *rasas* are rendered unreal in themselves. Or, this *mahārasa* is instrumental, *upāyātmaka*, in manifesting the subsidiary *rasas*. Or, yet again, this *mahārasa* is a collective *rasa* (*samudāyātamaka*), an assimilation of all the subsidiary *rasas*. For Abhinavagupta, all the three theories are acceptable as explanations of the relationship between the dominant aesthetic experience and the subsidiary experiences. The principle of parts constituting a whole and having their identity only in terms of the whole as articulated by Bharthari (5th century AD) is thus evoked by Abhinavagupta to assert the integrated nature of the aesthetic experience.

All the *rasas*, primary and subsidiary, are the 'meaning' of a *kāvya* (literary compositions). These *rasas* as enumerated by Bharata are nine or eight depending on whether *śanta rasa* is accepted as a *rasa* or not. A question is then asked. Why has Bharata enumerated the *rasas* in the given order? Why has the enumeration begun with *śṛṅgāra*? *Śṛṅgāra* is enumerated first, it is explained, because its *bhāva*, the causal factor, *rati*, desire or attraction, is a universal human experience; it is universally present in all beings, is known to everyone and gives pleasure to all. *Hāsya*, joy/laughter, follows *śṛṅgāra* in life also and is stated next in the enumeration. Its exact opposite, *karuṇa* marked by despair, is listed next. *Raudra* in its source resembles *karuṇa* – both involve some cause for grief – and is listed next. These four *rasas* relate to *kāma* and *artha* (two of the four *puruṣārthas*, ends of life, the two that the human beings do not have to persuaded or taught to strive for or pursue as they are almost natural impulses). *Vīra* is next listed as it concerns *dharma*, righteousness – it is manifest in the brave who protect those stricken by fear, the oppressed. And as it involves fear, *bhaya*, *bhayānaka* is listed as the sixth *rasa*[6]. As the *vibhāvas* of *bhayānaka* are productive of *bībhatsa* also, *bībhatsa* is listed next. As the *vīra*, that concerns both *bhayānaka* and *bībhatsa* – involving as all the three do, *bhaya* - does produce the effect of wonder or admiration, *adbhuta* is listed as the last *rasa*. This is the basis of the order of enumeration of *rasas*.

Why has Bharata enumerated the *rasas* in the given order? Why has the enumeration begun with *Śṛṅgāra*? *Śṛṅgāra* is enumerated first, it is explained, because its *bhāva*, the causal factor, *rati*, desire or attraction, is a universal human experience; it is universally present in all beings.

Nāṭya thus is *trivargātamaka*, that is instrumental in the promotion of *artha* (material well-being) *kāma* (worldly desires) and *dharma* (righteousness). All these fall under *pravṛtti-mārga*[7], the path of involvement in or engagement with the world. Abhinavagupta completes the argument by adding that the ninth *rasa*, *śānta rasa* is needed to be posited as it represents the *nivṛtti-mārga*, the path of freedom from involvement with the world, the path that promotes the fourth end of life, *mokṣa* (liberation from here and now), an end of life that no other *rasa* promotes. This *rasa* is experienced when one is stabilised in one's self.

Bharata after listing the eight *rasas* lists in *kārikās* 16, 17 the eight *sthāyibhāvas* (relatively more durable states) that evoke the *rasas*. Abhinavagupta explains that the performer (*naṭa*) cannot enact the effects of *vibhāvas*, *anubhāvas* and *sāttvikabhāvas*, without knowledge of the experiential states (*cittavṛttis*) such as *rati*, etc, what Bharata designates as *sthāyībhāvas*. *Sthāyibhāvas* are to be evoked through the enactment of physical conditions (*anubhāva*, *sāttvikabhāva*), voluntary and involuntary, and body positions, postures and through language (*āṅgika* and *vācika abhinaya*), therefore the artist, the *naṭa*, must know what state he is to evoke, must know its nature and substance. Therefore, says Abhinavagupta immediately after *rasa*, Bharata Muni first enumerates the eight *sthāyībhāvas*.

The question then is what is the *sthāyībhāva* for the ninth *rasa*, the *śānta rasa*? Four views are quoted: (i) by re-reading the text '*vismayaśca-iti*' (*kārikā* 16-17) as '*vismaya śama-ca-iti*', some thinkers posit *śama*,

6 So bhaya, fear, is generative of both 'terrifying' and 'valour' though in different ways. Later this kind of inter-relationship between *rasas* is again taken up for a separate discussion.

7 *Śruti* and *Smṛti* texts talk of three paths/attitudes to life: *pravṛtti*, involvement or participation; *nivṛtti*, withdrawal or abstinence, and *udāsīnatā*, detachment or indifference (to what one gets and what one loses). The eight *rasas* promote the three ends, *kāma* (worldly desires), *artha* (material goals) and *dharma* (righteousness) in that order. Art, therefore, is of this world. Rajaśekhara in the *Kāvyapuruṣotpattiḥ* (Origin of *Kāvya*), chapter of his 8th century text *Kāvyamīmāṁsā* narrates how when Sarasvati proceeded to leave the earth for *Brahmaloka* she was followed by her *Kāvya-puruṣa* but she told him, "Son, without Brahmā's desire you should not go the *Brahma-loka*. Thereafter he turned back." This narrative is in the legendary-symbolic mode. Here *Kāvya-puruṣa*, the son of Sarasvatī (goddess of wisdom and learning) stands for the domain of literary discourse; *Brahma-loka* symbolizes the discourse of metaphysical concerns and Sarasvati's insistence on *Kāvya-puruṣa* staying back on earth is a pointer to the laukika (of this world) nature of literary discourse. Literary discourse is worldly and is marked off from the philosophical discourse with its metaphysical concerns.

control of senses (*indriya nigraha*), as the *sthāyībhāva* for *śanta rasa*; (ii) others argue that *utsāha*, the *sthāyi* of *vīra* is also the *sthāyī* of *śanta rasa* as without enthusiasm no one shall seek the ultimate end of life – *mokṣa*; (iii) others argue that *jugupsā*, the *sthāyībhāva* of *bībhatsa* is the *sthāyī* of *śānta rasa* as well, for only a disgust with the material world leads to renunciation which in turn produces *śānta rasa*; (iv) still others argue that all the three – *śama*, *utsāha* and *jugupsā* – are *sthāyībhāva* for *śānta rasa*.

But Abhinavagupta takes the position that *vairājña*, indifference towards worldly objects born of proper knowledge (*tattvajñāna*), is *sthāyībhāva* that results in the state of deep peace in the self. So *nirveda*, the first of the *sañcārībhāvas* in Bharata's enumeration, is the *śthāyībhāva* for *śanta rasa*.

This raises two questions: (i) why *nirveda* has not been counted among *sthāyībhāvas*, and (ii) can a *sañcārībhāva* function as *sthāyībhāva*? The response to the first question is two-fold: *śānta rasa* is a *rasa* in *kāvya* but cannot be a *rasa* in *naṭya* for its *sthāyībhāva*, *śama*, actionlessness of all the five senses, cannot be represent in *nāṭya* which is an enactment, a performance. This is what Dhanika, the commentator of *Daśarūpaka* says. So *śama* is not counted as a *sthāyī*. Secondly, *nirveda* (indifference to or non-involvement in life) being *amangala* (not auspicious), it is not given the status of a relatively durable state; however, as it has the potential to be a *sthāyībhāva*, it is listed first in the enumeration of *sañcārībhāva* (*NS kā* 18–21). That a *sañcārī* can become *sthāyī* is allowed by Bharāta – as Abhinavagupta takes care to point out the *sthāyībhāvas* have not been enumerated, that is their count/number has not been fixed as has been done by Bharata in the case of *sañcārībhāvas*. So a *sañcārībhāva* such as *nirveda* has the *dharma*, properties of both the *sthāyī* and the *sañcārībhāvas*.

What is of interest is how Abhinavagupta explains the link between *abhinaya* (enactment) and *vṛtti* (style). These *vṛttis* belong to different kinds of plays and the *naṭa*, the performer has to be familiar with them.

As the *sāttvikabhāvas* combine in themselves the property of both the *sañcārībhāvas* and *abhinaya*, in that they may function as auxiliary states and also are expressive elements (are elements of enactment), they (*sāttvikabhāvas*) are enumerated (counted and listed) next (*NS.kā.*22). As they share the potential of *sañcārībhāvas*, they have been listed separately although as involuntary physical responses to experiences they are essentially elements of *abhinaya*, enactment.

And then the next *kārikā* 23 lists the four types of enactment (*abhinaya*) – *āngika* (of body and limbs, of movement and postures), *vācika* (language and words in dialogue, in songs and in the background), *āhārya* (objects, dress etc. and ornamentation) and *sāttvikabhāva* (manifest involuntary physical responses to experiences). These elements of the art of enactment are very familiar in ordinary life and, therefore, taken for granted but they are the very essence of drama as they make the difference between life and drama - what happens in life is enacted in drama. The difference between life and art is *abhinaya*. So after *rasa* and *bhāva*, the two objects of enactment, the experience as it is encountered in life, the elements of *abhinaya*, the means or instruments of enactment are listed.

Abhinaya, enactment, is of two kinds: (i) as in life (*loka-dharmī*), and (ii) specific to drama or/and stylized (*nāṭya-dharmī*). So Bharata follows up the *abhinaya kārikā* (23) with a prose statement about two kinds of enactment. When the representation/enactment is as in life, it is *loka-dharmī*; so when a man plays a male role, or even when a young actor acts as an old man, as old men actually are, and when drama time and drama space are analogous to that of the event in real life, it is *loka-dharmī*. And if a girl plays the role of Krishna or the enactment is stylized as in dance-dramas or is symbolic as in *kathākali*, it is *nāṭyadharmī abhinaya*. Another distinction is also to be made. If the drama follows the modes and manners of ordinary life, it is *loka-dharmī*; on the other hand, if the performance follows conventions of drama or a certain *śāstraic* conception of characters and events, it is *nāṭyadharmī*.

Bharata next sets out (*kā*. 25) the fifth element of *nāṭya* - *vṛtti*, style (of language and words). Four *vṛttis* or styles are listed – *bhāratī, sāttavatī, kaiśikī,* and *ārbhaṭṭī*. These are styles to be chosen in representation as is appropriate to the story, theme and character. For example, a play dealing with heroism and with a heroic protagonist will employ

sāttavattī vṛtti; similarly, for the enactment of *raudra* and *bībhatsa*, *ārbhaṭṭī vṛtti* is employed; for *śṛṅgāra*, *kaiśikī* style is appropriate and for the rest, *karuṇa*, etc. *bhāratī vṛtti* is appropriate. It is to be noted that these are not arbitrary conventions. Language and style naturally change with the change of subject and attitude. These names are given to the different kinds of style that people observably use in life. If on a sad moment, one speaks heroic language, it will be inappropriate. So for every occasion there is a given way of saying and speaking. These 'occasions' and the corresponding 'modes' have been taxonomised in this four-fold classification of styles[8].

What is of interest is how Abhinavagupta explains the link between *abhinaya* (enactment) and *vṛtti* (style). These *vṛtti*s belong to different kinds of plays and the *naṭa*, the performer, has to be familiar with them. The *naṭa* can enact only when he knows what he is to enact and these *vṛtti*s concretize what is to be enacted and how (*abhineyatā*). He also notes that these *vṛtti*s, are also broadly regional. So *kaiśikī vṛtti*, essentially emotional and soft, is more a characteristic of *prācya*, northeast, of the compositions of the northeast and this may be found to hold true even to day of the literatures in Bangla, Oriya and Assamese languages.

The musical notes, Abhinavagupta points out, are of course present in the instrumental and vocal music and in songs. But as music by itself adds to the beauty of performance as for example in *antarālāpa*: music that separates one scene from the other, the seven notes have been read out separately...

Next privates, styles of dress, ornaments and music are listed in *kā*.25. Five *pravṛttis* are mentioned *āvanti*, *dākṣiṇātya*, *ardhamāgadhī*, *pāñcālī*, and *madhyamā*. As they are more obviously regional, they correspond broadly to western, southern, eastern, northern and central India respectively. These five regions and regional styles may still be noted in these different geographical regions of India in the cities, for example, of Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Amritsar and Indore. So the same play will have different regional articulations as theatre. The same holds true of dance forms as well.

All this *abhinaya*, performance, Bharata says (*kā*. 27) ends in two kinds of *siddhi*, accomplishment or success, human or ordinary and godly or extra-ordinary. Abhinava does not add any explanatory comment, which means that Bharata's own explanation in *Nāṭyaśāstra*, chapter 27, of the two kinds of success is adequate. From *kārikā* 2 to 14, he describes the markers of normal success of performance and in *kārikā*s 16 and 17, he describes the extra-ordinary success of a performance. The 'human' (*mānuṣī*) success is evident in normal, appropriate audience responses to different kinds of *rasa* evoked. They are of two kinds: (i) of speech of language, and (ii) of the body. Thus when the audience appropriately expresses through expletives and exclamations approval, disapproval, wonder admiration or sorrow etc., it is *vāṅmayī siddhi*, the linguistic evidence of successful enactment. And when in enthusiasm the members of the audience stand up from their seats and applaud or give gifts to performers, it is the bodily (*śarīrī*) proof of the successful enactment. And against this, when the performance is marked by the evocation of intense, *sāttvika* (ennobling) *bhāva*s, states, and the whole theatre overflowing with spectators watches the performance in entranced silence and immobility, the performance obviously is an extraordinary success.

Statements about music and songs come next as these two are integral style enactment. In the prose text that follows *kā*. 26 the seven musical notes are listed and in the *kārikā*s 27, 28 and 29, the music produced by different instruments is described. In *kārikā* 30, the songs with their different functions in the enactment are described and in *kārikā* 31, the three kinds of theatre.

The musical notes, Abhinavagupta points out, are of course present in the instrumental and vocal music and in songs. But as music by itself adds to the beauty of performance as for example in *antarālāpa*: music that separates one scene from the other, the seven notes have been read out separately – *niṣāda*, *ṛṣabha*, *gāndhāra*, *madhyama*, *pañcama*, *dhaivata* and *ṣadja*. These are of two kinds – produced from the throat or with breath (from wind instruments such as the flute). Then four kinds of instruments played by hand/hands are listed: stringed (*vīṇā*), percussion (*mṛdanga*, *ḍholaka*), solid metal (to be struck) such as bells and those with holes (flute)[9].

8 Naturally, each style has its features and these have been described by poeticians such as Vāmana and Daṇḍin, among others.

9 Chapters 28 to 33 of *Nāṭyaśātra* are devoted to music, song and prosody.

Then in *kārikā* 30, five kinds of *gāna*, song, are listed. Abhinavagupta explains their functions: that which accompanies the entrance of a character and portrays his condition and his character is called *praveśaka* (*gāna*); that which communicates the inner state of a character who is already on the stage is called *prasāda* (*gāna*); that which marks the intervention of a different *rasa* in the main narrative - *rasa* is *ākṣepa* (*gāna*); that which accompanies special movements of the stage is *āntaramāna* (*gāna*) and that which accompanies the exit of a character is *niṣkrāmaka gāna*. This *gāna* explains Abhinavagupta, communicates to the auditors the cognitive state (*cittavṛtti*) of the characters. He further explains that these songs have a given configuration of words with recurring initial part and therefore they are separated from other music including songs in the performance.

And then in *kārikā* 31, the eleventh element of drama, *ranga*, theatre house, is taken up and three kinds of theatre houses are listed - square, rectangular and triangular. Appropriately it comes least, as all the other ten elements are realized, enclosed, inside the theatre-house. A proper theatre house with its stage and divisions facilitates the movement of actors, acting/enactment, singing and music. The words of the actors, those particularly that are deliberately enounced in low volume will be lost in too large a theatre house. Instrumental music will lose its gravity in a windy theatre house.

...What is the relationship between *sthāyībhāva* and *rasa*, that is, say between *rati* and *śṛṅgāra*? Does the *bhāva* itself transform into *rasa*? Or, is the *rasa* evoked by *bhāva*? Or is the *rasa* a manifestation of the internally existing *bhāvas* triggered by the *sthāyībhāva*? This question thus becomes a question defining *rasa*, of defining the aesthetic experience.

And then, Abhinava says Bharata closes this section with the declaration that he has declared the eleven elements of drama with their subject-matter (*udheśa*) and that hereafter he will examine each elements for its analytical content (*vibhāga*). Abhinava notes that Bharata thus divides his study of the elements of drama into two parts - *udheśa* (*kārikā*s 15–30) and *vibhāga* (*kārikā* 32 onwards). He explains that the analysis shall be carried out with the instruments of *lakṣaṇa* (markers), *bhāṣya* (explanatory commentary) and *parikṣā* (*ākṣepa-smādhana*, classification of objections or counter-view, also called *nirukta*). All this is carried out in *kārikā*s and at the end the *siddhānta-pakṣa*, the schools' point of view, which is the view of the *ṭīkākāra*, commentator, as well, is established.

Having made the promise "I shall examine each element now", Bharata proceeds to say that he will explain *rasa* first. *Kārikā* 6.32 is:

tatra rasāneva tāvadādāvabhivyākhyāmaḥ nahi rasādṛte kaścidartha: pravartate tatra vibhāvānubhāvavyabhicārīsámyogād rasaniṣpattiḥ - 6.32.

'First of all we shall explain *rasas*. Without *rasa*, no meaning gets constituted. By the conjunction of *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* and *sañcārībhāva*, *rasa* becomes available/ ready to be experienced.'

The question of nature of *rasa*, and of how it gets constituted has come in for much reflection in the tradition and is reflected upon in great deal by Abhinavagupta himself.

As Abhinavagupta notes explicitly a little later in the discussion, *sthāyībhāva* is not mentioned in the *rasa-sūtra*. This raises the question about the nature and status of *sthāyībhāva* – how is *sthāyībhāva* different from the three *bhāva* mentioned in the *rasa sūtra* and how is it related to *rasa*? This question is pertinent because after analysing *rasa* in chapter 6, Bharata Muni in the seventh chapter, separates *sthāyibhāva* (7.8) from other *bhāvas* and describes it as the object of enactment (7.7)[10]. Abhinavagupta notes this prominently and says that *sthāyībhava* is not enacted; it is the object of enactment, *abhidheya* (*Abhinavabhāratī*, on *kārikā* 37). Bharata Muni notes (7.3) that *bhāvas* are those elements that bring about the state of *rasa*. *Bhāva*s are of three kinds – 8 *sthāyī*, 33 *sañcārī* and 8 *sāttvika*. The conjunction of properties of these forty-nine facilitates the realization of *rasas*. Then there are specifically *vibhāva* and *anubhāva*. The term *vibhāva*, with the pre-fix *vi*, is used for special knowledge (*viśiṣta jñāna*) - *kāraṇa* (cause) *nimitta* (means) and *hetu*

10 The rasa theory is built around the concept of *bhāva*. *Bhāva* is that which brings about a conditionor which gets established (through what happens). *Bhāva* is defined in *Amarkoṣa* as "*vikāro manasa*"; so *bhāva* means a change in the native state of *mana* (mind). *Amarkoṣa* lists (3.2.15) thirteen synonyms of *bhāva*. (For more details see, Kapil Kapoor and Nalini M. Ratnam, Literary Theory. Indian Conceptual Framework. Delhi: Affiliated East-West Press.1998. pp. 105-106)

(illustrating medium[11]) are its synonyms. That in terms of which the meaning of verbal, bodily and involuntary enactments (*abhinaya*) are grasped or known, is called *vibhāva*. It is in terms of the *vibhāva* that the words, actions and involuntary responses make sense to, are cognized by the auditors (NS, 7.4). *Anubhāva* are so called because they are manifest reflexes of *vibhāva* and enable the auditors to grasp the inner condition that could provide the impulse for such physical action (NS, 7.5). It is *anubhāva* that are enacted along with *sāttvikabhāva*. *Anubhāva* are the variable manifest reflex of *bhāva* (experience) while *sāttvikabhāva* are involuntary physical reflex of what is experienced.

Among the five *bhāvas*, the *sthāyībhāva* is different and primary because "this is the *kāraṇabhāva* (causal *bhāva*) of the *rasa* (final effect or core) of the experience that touches one's heart and spreads through the body as fire spreads in dry wood." (*NS*, 7.7) It is the *sthāyībhāva* that in conjunction with other elements facilitates the experience of *rasa*. It is legitimately asked why *sthāyībhāva* alone has that property and not *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* or *sañcārī*? It is urged that all human beings have in common the same bodily features, yet some of them become supreme or masters by virtue of their family, conduct, knowledge, actions and some extra-ordinary endowment while others on account of their lower mental caliber rest content with serving then, in the same way *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, and *sañcārībhāva* are dependent on the *sthāyībhāva*, that is, as Abhinavagupta notes, *sthāyībhāva* is the *abhidheya*, object of representation, and all the other flow from it. This is explained by an analogy—

"Just as the king among ordinary people and the teacher among learners are primary, in the same way *sthāyībhāva* is the primary *bhāva* among *bhāvas*". (NS 7.8).

So, in the *rasa-sūtra*, *sthāyībhāva* is not mentioned – it evokes *rasa* and *rasa* is mentioned and *rasa* results from the enactment (*abhinaya*) of *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, *sañcārībhāva* and *sāttvikabhāva*, all of which have as their object of representation, the *sthāyībhāva*. Cognition of the *sthāyībhāva* spreads though the whole being of the auditor who then relishes the *rasa* of that experience.

This begs the question – what is the relationship between *sthāyībhāva* and *rasa* that is, say between *rati* and *śṛṅgāra*? Does the *bhāva* itself transform into *rasa*? Or, is the *rasa* evoked by *bhāva*? Or is the *rasa* a manifestation of the internally existing *bhāvas* triggered by the *sthāyībhāva*? This question thus becomes a question defining *rasa*, of defining the aesthetic experience.

Abhinavagupta recapitulates, from the tradition, four positions on this issue with each succeeding position arguing against the preceding. The four successive positions are:

1. Of Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa, who explains that combined with/intensified/reinforced by *vibhāva*, etc. The *sthāyībhāva* itself becomes *rasa*. Unaccompanied / un-intensified / not reinforced, it is just *sthāyībhāva*. This is the difference between *sthāyībhāva* and *rasa*. Abhinavagupta points out that other earlier *ācāryas* such as Daṇḍin also subscribe to this view. Daṇḍin says that intensified becomes *śṛṅgāra* and *krodha* intensified becomes *raudra*[12].

2. Of Śankuka who rejects Lollaṭa's view that *sthāyībhāva* itself is *rasa*. Abhinavagupta cities eight arguments of Śankuka against Lollaṭa's position. His arguments[13] run like this -

(a) Only when it is in conjunction with vibhāva, etc. that a *sthāyībhāva* becomes perceptible, but Lollaṭa says that what becomes perceptible is *rasa* is which case the *sthāyībhāva* pre-exists the conjunction (of *vibhāva*, etc.)

(b) In that case again all *bhāva* have to be construed as objects of representation (*abhidheya*), instead as representers, and as their knowledge is knowledge of the non-present, they cannot be experienced unless we accept that they, along with *rasa*, also pre-exist, in which case

(c) No conjunction or process is required for *rasa*-realization as *rasa* pre-exists as no different from the *sthāyībhāva*

(d) And if the *sthāyībhāvas*, *rati* etc. are to be accepted as *rasas* also, then corresponding to the variability of the *sthāyībhāva* – and *sthāyībhāvas* vary according to the *triguṇātmaka prakṛti* of the constituents of *vibhāva* – we will have to posit variable *rasa* also. But *rasa* is *ekarūpa*, unchanging and invariable

(e) Bharata's classification of *hāsya* into six types according to six kinds of *sthāyībhāva* would become unnecessary if the variability of *sthāyībhāva* would condition the variability of *rasa*

11 Such as lightning – in its flash, the objects are revealed.
12 *Kāvyādarśa* 2.281 and 2.283.
13 See, *Abhinavabhāratī* on *kārikā*, 31.

(f) We will have to posit hundreds of *rasa* for a *sthāyībhāva* such as *rati* (in view of the ten states of *kāma* enumerated by Vatsyyana)

(g) In any case *sthāyībhāvas* like grief are the most intense in the beginning and grow weaker with time. So intensification of *śoka* not being possible, how can *karuṇa rasa* get evoked / generated?

(h) Generally therefore to say that intensified *sthāyībhāva* is *rasa* is not acceptable

Śankuka then posits his own view—

What is present in the object of representation (Rāma, etc.) as a reflex (*anukaraṇa*) of the *sthāyībhāva* and is an inference (*anumiti*) from the enactment of the performer who through causal *vibhāva*, *anubāva* as effects and the supporting *vyābhicārībhāvas* generates, through his effort (born of practice and training), this reflex of the *sthāyībhāva* known as *rasa* (which is therefore different from *sthāyībhāva*)

3. Of Bhaṭṭa Tauta (Abhinavagupta's teacher and referred to as *upādhyāya* by him) who rejects *rasānukaraṇavāda* of Śankuka. Is this reflex, he asks, is this *rasa*-as-reflex (*anukaraṇa rūpa rasa*), argued from the point of view of the auditor or the performer (*naṭa*) or is it argued as the experience as it was or is it argued that this is what Bharata himself has said in his own words?

None of these is valid, Abhinavagupta reports.

A reflex has to be grasped/cognised as a reflex. But the *sthāyībhāva* which is a cognitive state of the self (*cittavṛtti rūpa*) and non-material cannot be seen to have an identifiable reflex in the material body or the performance or the words of the performer. We have to see / experience both the original and the reflex to mark one of them as reflex. But while the *rati* of the performer is experienced by the auditors, none of them have access to the original *sthāyībhāva*, the *rati* in Rāma. Therefore, the *rati* that becomes perceptible in the performer is just *rati* and cannot be said to be a reflex (*anukaraṇa*) of the original *sthāyībhāva*.

It may be argued that since the *rati* in the performer who is enacting Rāma is made perceptible by artificial, surrogate *vibhāva*, etc. this *sthāyībhāva* in the performer is *pratīyamāna* (symbolic), not real, and therefore it is a reflex.

This argument is also rejected. The *vibhāva* etc. are surrogate but, for the auditors, the *rati* in the performer is real; if it were not so, there will be no effect. This is explained by the fact that the ordinary mind associates events/experiences with the known, the well-known causes or factors. So far the auditors, the *vibhāva*, etc. are real; that is, the auditors begin by accepting them as real. Further, the knowledge arising from artificial, untrue causes may be false knowledge (*mithyājñāna*) but cannot be called a reflex (*anukaraṇa*).

It cannot be a reflex from the point of view of the performer either– for, to establish something as a reflex of something, *sādṛsyatā* is required. But in an enactment, the original/the object of representation is never present and therefore *anukaraṇa* (reflex or imitation) is ruled out.

Nor is *anukaraṇa* of *vastusthiti*, experience as it was, possible because what becomes perceptible later, after a lapse of time, cannot be called a *vastu-vṛtta*, a reconstruction of the original object.

Nor is there any statement by Bharata to the effect that 'the imitation of *sthāyībhāva* is *rasa*'.

An unnamed commentator, apparently an adherent of Sāṁkhya school, is also reported to have said that the inner conditions of *sukha*, *duḥkha*: are brought about by external factors, *vibhāva*, etc. that are variable like everything else according to the *triguṇātmaka prakṛti* (*sattva-rajas-tamas*) and therefore *rasa* is also variable-*sukha-duḥkha-mohātmaka*. This contradicts Bharata's theory in which inner *sthāyībhāva* pre-exists the conjunction with external *vibhāva*, etc. which is not the case here as the inner and condition, in this view, is brought about by external factors. Further in an integral cognition (*rasa*) three mutually exclusive perceptions (*sukha, duḥkha, moha*) cannot co-exist.

4. Of Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka who says that *rasa* is neither perceptible (*pratīti*) nor produced (*utpanna*) nor manifested (*abhivyakta*). It is an object of experience or 'consumption'. The word used is *bhoga*. Now for him *rasa* is not something out there – it is experienced in the self; it exists in the self and is 'activated' by the performance. If it exists in the object of representation or in the performer, it is of no use to the *sāmājika*, the participating spectator. If it is a matter of perception, the auditor should feel sorrowful when grief is enacted and so on. But this is not so. He experiences *ānanda*. Further marvellous events/characters (Hanumāna or his crossing of the ocean) cannot be generalised to include one's ordinary self. The same objections hold if *rasa* is believed to be produced. And if pre-existing *rasa* is supposed to be made manifest by *vibhāva*, etc. then if will be variable according to the variation of external

objects or causes. And again we have to ask whether it exists in the other, the performer or in the self of the auditor.

Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's position is—*rasa* is an extra-ordinary experience in the inner self, almost like being in the presence of the *śānta puruṣa*, blissful, illuminating *para-brahman*. This is made possible by the potential of *kāvya*, that is language, to evoke a world, different from one of experience and memory, a world laced by *rājasika* and *tāmasika guṇa* and structured by the excellences of *kāvya* and by *alaṁkāra* figures of speech, a world predominantly *sāttvika*, blissful and illuminating. This art-construct transforms the ordinary world of *vibhāva* etc. into an extra-ordinary, experience of heightened consciousness called *rasa*.

Abhinavagupta is not able to accept this theory. He says Śankuka's arguments against Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa's position hold against Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's position as well, particularly the argument about *sthāyībhāva* as the *rasa* and the consequent variability of *rasa*. Further what is the status of an entity that is neither perceptible nor produced nor manifested as *rasa* evidently is in Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's position? But both *bhoga* (experience) and *āsvādana* (tasting), processes posited by Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka in his explanation of art experience, not only involve objects of perception but are themselves perceptible. The very world *bhoga* involves senses.

Abhinavagupta recalls the explanations of five scholars in the tradition – Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa, Śankuka, Bhaṭṭa Tauta, the Sāṁkhya thinker and Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka and he shows that the explanations of these thinkers do not give a satisfactory definition of *rasa* particularly in relation to the *sthāyībhāva* in the over-all frame work of Bharata's theory.

Abhinavagupta continues—even if the argument that the perception of *rasa* consists precisely in its being experienced (*bhogikaraṇa*), there are other objections to Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's position. We have to posit endless variable experiential perceptions (*āsvādātāmaka pratitīya*) varying with their modifications through the three-fold nature (*triguṇātmaka prakṛti*). But then, as has already been stated, how can a non-material, experience such as *rasa* be divided, separated and classified. There is no limit or identity to what the postulated linguistic processes of *abhidhā* (power to denote), *bhāvakatva* (abstract denotation) and *bhojakatva* (individual construction of meaning) can evoke. Verbal compositions (*kāvya*) are said to denote *rasas*. If by that one means a knowledge or cognition of a 'taste'/experience, it is acceptable. But what *bhāvana*, the denotation of words, constructs is not the rasa but the causal object (*viṣaya*) of *rasa*. Thus, to take a simple example – what is constructed in a poem such as Wordsworth's *Michael* is the *sthāyībhāva* of śoka, grief. The *rasa*, *karuṇa*, compassion, is evoked but constituted in the self of the reader/experiencer.

In this manner, in his commentary on the *rasa sūtra* (*NS* 6.32), Abhinavagupta recalls the explanations of five scholars in the tradition – Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa, Śankuka, Bhaṭṭa Tauta, the Sāṁkhya thinker and Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka and shows that the explanations of these thinkers do not give a satisfactory definition of *rasa* particularly in relation to the *sthāyībhāva* in the over-all frame work of Bharata's theory. Then the question is in that case, what is the actual form or substance (*tattva*) of *rasa*? In fact, it would appear that the entity *rasa* is devoid of a substratum (*nirālambana*) and appears to be a completely abstract concept.

Interestingly, Abhinavagupta says, 'so what?' That is, so what if it is indefinable and cannot be locked on to something already known. So many of the Vedic concepts, Abinavagupta continues, defy definitions and *rasa* is a concept posited in the Veda. Therefore *rasa* as a category has the Vedic authority. Innumerable thinkers, Abhinavagupta continues, have tried to show the vacuity of Vedic concepts and principles. But such attempts have not succeeded in refuting the Vedic concepts—rather, in the process of disputation, with the progressive sharpening of the mental faculty and the consequent deepening of understanding, the knowledge coded in the concept gradually becomes clear and comprehensible. The normal epistemologies appear to be limited if they merely contradict the Vedic authority (*śabda pramāṇa*). The restless intellect of the analysts gradually ascends and 'sees' (grasps) the substance of the concept and that final understanding is important. The early steps in the process, the alternatives constituted by the fluid, non-determinate intellect are not important. That is, they are important only in so far as they lead to a determinate, final understanding. It is amazing, he adds, that the first constitution of objects, even material objects, *padārthas*, is almost *nirālambana*, without a substratum. But once a foundation is laid, marvelous

solid cities and bridges are built on them[14]. Therefore, Abhinavagupta says, we have not refuted the principles of the *pūrvācārya*s, the earlier teachers, because establishing coherence among the ideas of the earlier teachers amounts almost to constructing an original theory.

So what is this object, *rasa*? Abhinavagupta starts by saying that he has nothing new to say and he shall only paraphrase Bharata – "meaning of the composition (*kāvyārtha*) is *rasa*?" He gives the examples of Mīmāṁsā sentences. The *arthavādas* (statements that praise or extol) of Mīmāṁsā, such as "*vanaspati* (trees and plants) sat in the *yajña*', '*prajāpati* took out the fat of his body and poured it into fire," point towards, suggest, certain actions, the performers and their ability to perform these actions. A competent performer (*adhikārī*) is one who likes some action(s) and would like to perform it. Such a person on hearing such a sentence first has a preliminary, common, direct perception or understanding of its meaning. This is followed by a different, deeper understanding arrived at, in this case, by excluding the past tense and substituting one's self for *prajāpati* to take the form " let me –sit, take this, give/pour....". In the same way, Abhinavagupta continues, from a poetic/literary sentence, a *sahṛdaya* (one who shares the sensibility of the composer) arrives at the evoked/suggested *rasa*-laced meaning through a process that is more complex and elaborate than the ordinary comprehension of sentence meaning. One who can experience this would be an *adhikārī*, a competent auditor, one with a clear heart and an extraordinary ability (*pratibhā*) to grasp the sentence meaning[15]. This is a mental/cognitive perception, intuitive, and almost as if one is actually in the presence of the experience.

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After the comprehension of sentence meanings, the cognition/prepositional content of that and that sentence, free of the coordinate of time, takes shape in the mind almost as if the signified is actually present to the self (*sākṣātkārātmaka*). This cognitive experience/knowledge, Abhinavagupta explains, is entirely autonomous. He explains with reference to Kalidas's *Śakuntalā* – the unobstructed experience/cognition of the fear (*bhaya*) of the young one of the deer freed of the coordinates of time and space through *sādhārṇikaraṇa*, generalisation, freed of the self-linking, regulative 'I fear' or 'He fears' and different from the real life experience/knowledge that may produce of joy or sorrow, this unobstructed, focused cognition realized in the self is the *bhyānaka rasa*, 'Terrifying', that fills our whole Being. Our Self remains all the while in a detached state – neither indifferent nor very involved. Since such cognition is autonomous of the experiencer, it is 'abstract' and therefore appears *ekarūpa*, undifferentiated to all auditors (*sāmājika*). All auditors have the same *rasa* experience as all often have the same in-born sense of joy and sorrow (*sukha, duḥkha*). The fact of the self deeply moved by such a *rasa*-experience is denoted by the word *camatkāra* (literally, 'miracle/marvel'). It can be understood also as a mental operation, a mental construction or a flesh of intuition (*pratibhāna*). As such, it is neither of this world, nor false, not describable, not resembling anything nor a reflection of anything in this world. Thus the unobstructed experience (*pratīti*) in the self of a *bhāva* is called *rasa*.

Abhinavagupta has been stressing the nature of *rasa* as unobstructed/unhindered perception/experience. Not everyone is able to have this experience. Arising from this, he discusses seven kinds of hindrances in the realisation of *rasa*–experience. First is the inability to believe in the reality of what is enacted. If one considers what is enacted as impossible, then in the absence of belief or sincerity of the enactment one cannot have the *rasa* experience. To overcome this,

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14 As Ācārya Viśveśvara observes in his comment on Abhinavagupta's comment– "Though we do see some foundation/substratum of all the objects of knowledge, yet that foundation/substratum (*ādhāra*) itself has no foundation/substratum (*ādhāra*) – '*mūla mūlābhāvādamūlama mūlam*'. A root has no root and a source or core has no source or core. But on the foundation of this substratum-less source or core, the whole world is constructed. In the same way, though all the principles proposed as the foundation of *rasa* have been refuted and the concept has been left without any substratum, the entire superstructure of literary theory and *rasa*-framework has been built on that concept." (*Abhinavabhāratī ke Tīn Adhyāya*, First, Second and Sixth. Ed. and translator, Ācārya Viśveśvara. Delhi: Department of Hindi,University of Delhi P. 469).

15 Bhartṛhari had noted that the meaning of the sentence is understood as "a flash of understanding (*pratibhā*) ...it can not be explained to others as such and such. It is something in definable... None can avoid in one's activities that *pratibhā*... even the animals... who transtorms the voice of the male cuckoo in spring" (*Vākyapadīya*, II. 143-149). Abhinavagupta suggests that there is a special endowment that enables *rasa* experience.

well-known objects, well-known narratives and well-known protagonists are made the subject matter of representation in plays with the object of communicating some message or imparting some knowledge.

Second hindrance in the realisation of *rasa* is the auditor's close identification of the experience either with his own self or with the performer (*naṭa*) which reduces the dimension of the experience to the particular and the auditor in that case is all the time paraphrasing the art-experience in relation to his self and limiting it to his own hopes and anxieties – the *ekarūptā* is lost. This prevents the cognition of the universal, general experience that is *rasa*.

The third hindrance is being in a state of affliction – being afflicted by sorrow or joy. When in such a state, one cannot have the 'one-pointedness' (*ekāgratā*) of consciousness that is necessary to immerse oneself in the aesthetic experiences.

The fourth hindrance is the epistemological inadequacy, the almost complete reliance on words and inferences. Related to it is the fifth hindrance – exclusion of direct perception in verbal art - perception is the strongest means of knowledge but in verbal art, one depends on language and the experience has to be inferred or constructed by the auditor. Even then the human psyche is such that our cognitions await direct perception or experience for confirmation and complete clarity. Such is the strength of perception that what is gained from direct perception is not modified by thousand inferences or verbal knowledge. Thus the knowledge that arises from language is *vikalpa jñāna* (that arises purely from words) or has the nature of *sphoṭa* (mental construction) and therefore is not sufficient for *rasa* experiences. This is where drama has an edge - in drama there is enactment (*abhinaya*) on the stage and *abhinaya* is in the domain of perception - the auditor actually sees and hears and does not depend only on words or inference.

The sixth hindrance is distraction by some non-primary elements of experience. Thus the auditor may get stuck in the *vibhāva* - elements or in the *vyabhicārī*, the auxiliary states and not go beyond to the primary (*pradhāna*) *rasa* - experience.

Then he asks - what is a 'primary *rasa* – experience'? Only those *rasa* - experiences, Abhinavagupta explains, are primary that are related to the four ends of life - the *puruśārthas*, *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, *mokṣa*, which Abhinavagupta reads in the sequence of *kāma*, *artha*, *dharma* and *mokṣa*, a sequence beginning with the strongest and the most pervasive psychic force or urge. Accordingly, the four corresponding *sthāyībhāvas*, *rati*, *krodha*, *utsāha*, *nirveda*, are the primary states[16]: *rati* involves *kāma* directly and *dharma*, righteousness, indirectly. *Krodha*, anger, is situated in *artha*, worldly objects. *Utsāha* is involved in *kāma* and also *dharma*. *Nirveda* that is born of 'true knowledge' (*tattva jñāna*) is an instrument of *mokṣa*, deliverance from the binding of this world here and now. One of these four is generally predominant in a play, though each of them can get inter-laced in terms of its substance and quality with the others. When experienced directly in the self, this *rasa*-experience, this knowledge, is a form of joy (*ānanda svarūpa*) - even in the relish of grief (at separation), Abhinavagupta points out the hearts of young, innocent girls experience peace (*viśrānti*) and it is the absence of the peace of heart that is rightly considered as *duḥkha*: (sorrow) by Sāṁkhya thinkers. However each of these four primary *bhāvas* may be touched by, coloured by, the elements of *duḥkha*. The other five *sthāyībhāvas* are even more subject to being marked, coloured by, causes and factors (*vibhāvas*) found in ordinary people. Thus it is the tendency of the ordinary persons to laugh, to mourn, to be frightened, to speak ill of others and be surprised or amazed (at the happiness or material well-being of others). So *hāsa* (laughter), *śoka* (grief), *bhaya* (fear), *jugupsā* (disgust) and *vismaya* (wonderment) are not primary (*pradhāna*). All these may as instruments of *purṣārtha* (four ends of life) be useful auxiliaries in a primary *rasa* – experience such as *rati* etc.

A categorical statement follows that these nine are the *sthāyībhāvas*, no more. These are of the nature of in-

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16 This would also determine the choice of subject matter or themes.

born drives or states resulting from the impressions of so many lives (*janmāntara*) and all human beings are born only with these drives – they are genetic endowments. The meta-rule for human nature is – "dislike of sorrow (*duḥkha*:) and eager for happiness (*sukha*)". So, every human being (1) seeks pleasure (this indicates the *sthāyībhāva*, *rati*), (2) for pleasure laughs at others (*hāsa*), (3) suffers on being separated from the source of pleasure in the form of a loved object or person (this indicates *śoka*), (4) on account of such a separation, develops anger (*krodha*), (5) on account of helplessness is afraid (*bhaya*), (6) yearns for and makes effort to acquire or achieve something (this indicates *utsāha*), (7) is full of dislike for unpleasant things (*jugupsā*), (8) is surprised at the unexpected deeds or conduct or thoughts (this indicates *vismaya*), (9) has the urge to renounce all these burdens or constraints (*nirveda*). No one, says Abhinavagupta, is born without these *cittavṛttis* (cognitive/mental tendencies), the only difference is that some of us have more of one and some have less. In some people these are directed at proper (*ucita*) objects/persons, in others at the undesirable and only those are worthy of being emulated, enjoined or represented that are helpful in the realisation of the four ends of life (*puruṣārtha*).

Once evoked the *sthāyībhāva* along with its manifesters or markers, the three subordinate *bhāvas*, collectively engenders in the intellect of the auditor, a meaning (*artha*) in the form of an extra-ordinary (*alaukika*), unhindered (*nirvighna*) cognition (consciousness) that is the object/subject of tasting, experiencing (*carvaṇā*).

On the other hand, the *vyabhicarī bhāvas* are transient[17] and auxiliary. They are not in-born and they take shape in our consciousness temporarily in the presence of the given causal factors (*vibhāva*, etc.) and when the causal factors cease to be, they dissolve and do not necessarily continue to exist as *saṁskāras* (traces/impressions). But the *sthāyībhāvas* continue to be present as strong *saṁskāras* even after their operation is over and even when they apparently dissolve. In fact the auxiliary *bhāvas* are contingent on the *sthāyībhāva* – they are brought up in the consciousness by the central, primary experience. In a beautiful analogy, Abhinavagupta compares the *vyabhicārī bhāvas* to the different coloured beads strung on a thread, the thread of *sthāyībhāva*. Like the coloured beads, the *auxiliary bhāvas* all become a part of one string and while at specific points the string seems to take different colours, when the thread becomes visible these all become shades that the thread of *sthāyībhāva* assumes momentarily. In between and ever so often, between the 'beads' the *sthāyībhāva* is experienced in its native, uncoloured state.

In this manner, the sixth hindrances – distraction by subordinate elements – is clarified and refuted by establishing the primacy of *sthāyībhāvas* in relation to the other *bhāvas*.

Then the seventh possible hindrance in *rasa*–realisation is taken up. This is doubt, *saṁśaya*. As there is no one to one correspondence between *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* and *vyabhicārībhāva* on the one hand and the *sthāyībhāva* on the other, there can be doubt about the *sthāyībhāva* that is signified by the enactment of any element of the three. Thus tears can signify joy, being deeply moved, an eye disease or sorrow. So on seeing tears, should one assume the presence of grief (*śoka*) as the cause? There can be doubt. Abhinavagupta explains that Bharata Muni by using the word *saṁyoga*, conjunction, has refuted this hindrance. It is the conjunction of all the three - *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* and *vyabhicārībhāva* - that evokes the *sthāyībhāva*. The conjunction of *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* and *vyabhicārībhāva* will unambiguously evoke only one *sthāyībhāva*. Once evoked the *sthāyībhāva* along with its manifesters or markers, the three subordinate *bhāvas*, collectively engenders in the intellect of the auditor, a meaning (*artha*) in the form of an extra-ordinary (*alaukika*), unhindered (*nirvighna*) cognition (consciousness) that is the object/subject of tasting, experiencing (*carvaṇā*). This tasting/experiencing is the substance, the only meaning (*artha*) of a composition and comes into being only for that time and does not pre-exist nor does it continue to exist afterwards – it exists only in that interregnum and this is *rasa*, an entity different from the *sthāyībhāva*. So *sthāyībhāva* is not *rasa*, and only as a matter of form, it is said that '*sthāyībhāva* has turned into *rasa*'. Because unlike the *sthāyībhāva*,

17 As is beautifully said, they are '*udaya-asta rūpa*', that rise and set.

rasa does not arise from any of the well-known epistemologies – it is not a product of *smṛti*, memory, *anumāna*, inference or *laukika pratyakṣa*, worldly perception. As something experienced or grasped in the heart, and therefore having the possibility of being the same (*ekarūpa*) for everyone, the auditor (*sāmājika*) with the power of his sympathetic consciousness (*sahṛdyatva*) experiences through absorption (*tanmayī bhāva*) the *vibhāvas*, etc. as non-partitive *rasa*-taste-seeds, the generators, of proper *carvaṇā*. This experiencing/tasting, indefinable in itself, is gained by the strength of an extraordinary conjunction of *vibhāvas*, etc. It is a process that is evidently different from the known epistemologies in that in does not suffer from their limitation; it is also different from *yogī-pratyakṣa*, the extraordinary perception of a *yogī* in *samādhi* in that it is neither detached (*taṭastha*) nor initially vague. It is also different from the perception of a *paramayogī*, the ascetic who has renounce everything, in that it is not stabilised and, unlike in the case of the *paramyogi pratyakṣa*, it has a distinct element of *āhlāda* joy.

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Further as the *vibhāvādi* are generalized in the process, when *rati* etc. manifests itself, there is no room for any hindrances or obstruction. This can happen only if the *vibhāva* with their particularity are either the cause (*karaka hetu*) or the manifester (*jñāpyahetu*) of *rasa*, which is not the case[18]. *Rasa* is therefore neither produced (*kārya*) nor is it manifested (*jñāpya*). In that case what kind of an object it is for objects are either produced or manifested? Abhinavagupta says, if *rasa* is not like any other object, it only establishes its extraordinariness (*alaukikatva*). If it is to be compared, it can be compared only to the 'taste' of *ṭhaṇḍai*[19]–its 'taste' is not like the taste of any of its elements; it is a transcendental taste. The same holds true of *rasa*. It is *vilakṣaṇa*, defies known markers. In that case, the *purva pakṣa* (opposed point of view) again argues that in that case *rasa* cannot be an object of knowledge (*prameya*). Abhinavagupta agrees and says that its not being an object of knowledge is of no consequence, for *rasa* is an object to be experienced / tasted.

One more objection is raised. It is noted that Bharata Muni talks of its *niṣpatti*, maturisation or generation. Abhinavagupta rejoins that *niṣpatti* is predicated not of *rasa*, but of its being tasted (*āsvādana*). He concludes that this 'tasting' is an operation neither of known epistemologies nor of known causes (*kāraṇa*). Even then, being marked by self-consciousness, they cannot be dismissed on unreal or untrue. This 'tasting' is 'perceptible' (*pratīti*) but it is obviously different from the ordinary sensory.

Abhinavagupta then sums up this detailed analysis of the *rasa sūtra*.

"In a play, the performer wears the dress and ornaments similar to those of the object of representation and these fill his intellect. But inspite of his knowledge and impressions of the past (performance/experience) and in spite of the discipline imposed by the text, *Rāma-buddhi*, 'the way Rāma thought or felt', does not get stabilized in the performer's intellect. So the enactment (*anukaraṇa*) is de-linked from the space-time coordinates of both the performer (*anukartā*) and the performed (*anukārya*). And the ordinary worldly *vyabhicārībhāva* employed to suggest *rati*, etc. also do not conform to the requirements of any given space-time. In this experience of *rati*, the auditor is not impersonal or detached as his self is marked by traces of the past or/and past-life experiences. The appearance of Sīta-Rāma etc. is also not bound to any particular original so that a given dress or ornament will not impede the communication or grasp of the experience[20]. Nor does one experience the meaning or *bhāva* as belonging strictly to the performer so that the auditor does not feel sadness or jealousy at what he sees as the *rati* –experience of the performer. The experience therefore exists neither in the object of representation nor in the performer. So, quoting both the Buddhist *kṣaniktāvādī* (momentariness) thinkers and the

18 There are two kinds of *padārtha*: (i) produced (*kārya*), effect/result, of a *kāraṇa*, as *nyāya* philosophy argues, and (ii) manifested (*abhivyakta*), that, according to Sāṁkhya philosophy, exist in a subtle from in their cause itself (as oil in seeds) and are made manifest by some instrument (*karaṇa*). The unusual *vibhāvas* are neither *kāraka-hetu* nor *jñāpya-hetu* for *rasa*, which then becomes an unusual object (*padārtha*) being neither produced nor manifested. This is how the argument runs.

19 An Indian summer drink made of almonds, fruit seeds, milk, pepper, jaggery and ice (with cannabis optional) prepared through a long process of grinding and mixing and icing.

20 Hence, the *Rāmāyaṇa* story can be enacted in diverse ways in Cambodia, Thailand, Bali, Japan and in different parts of India

sthirtāvādī (proponents of given fixed material reality) *Naiyāyikas* with approval, he talks of the stream of consciousness (*cittadhārā*) and says that *śṛṅgāra rasa*, for example, is the *rati*, a form, grasped by the auditor, in the same one flow of cognitive consciousness (*cittavṛtti pravāha*). Like all forms, *rasa*, too, is a momentary formation.

This discussion is followed by Abhinavagupta giving examples from Sanskrit literature to illustrate how from words and from enactment, the auditors grasp definite knowledge. Just as the worshipper who contemplates on the idol of Vāsudeva does not have the perception 'this is Vāsudeva', yet through the means of the idol the particular god by becoming the object of a clear resolve grants blessings to the worshipper. In the same way, the substance of the definitive knowledge born of the performer's enactment, free of particular time and space grants to the auditor beneficial knowledge called *vidhisthānīya artha*) in the form of 'this action leads to this result'. Just as the Vedic injunctions (*vidhivākyas*) give the knowledge of what one ought to do (*kartavya*), in the same way one gets the knowledge of what should be done and what should not be done (*kartavya-akartavya*) from drama. As this arises from what is grasped through visual perception and as there are no impediments in these cognitions, the knowledge arising from drama is valid knowledge (*samyaka jñāna*).

The whole process cannot be completely understood except through analogy and Abhinavagupta cites the analogy (*dṛṣṭānta*) that Bharata Muni has given from cooking– 'Where do we see a new unfamiliar object (*rasa*) resulting from the conjunction (*saniyoga*) of different objects?" In cooking says Bharata Muni. He uses three terms – *vyañjana, auṣadhi* and *saṁyoga*. Elements, required for preparing food are called *vyañjana* - pungent, sweet and sour, they are of different kinds such as curd and carrot-wine. Wheat, tamarind, pulses and turmeric are *auṣadhi*s, herbs, used in cooking. Jaggery is *dravya*. Mixing all these properly in the process of cooking, through their conjunction (*saṁyoga*) achieved by an able cook, the *śāḍava rasa* is realized. In music, *śāḍava* is a *raga* family, in which only six *svara*s, notes, (*sā, re, gā, mā* and *dhā*) are used. Extending this to food, it stands for a *rasa*, taste, that is produced by mixing materials of six tastes or *rasas* – sweet, sour, bitter, tangy and astringent – these are the six tastes, *rasas*, in medicine and cooking. *śāḍava rasa* is the transcendental taste, a new taste different from all of the six. In the same way the *sthāyībhāvas*, different from the worldly *bhāvas*, in extra-ordinary conjunction (*saṁyoga*) with *vibhāva*s, etc. momentarily reach *rasatva*, the state of *rasa*.

In this connection then, it is asked –"What is the meaning of the word *rasa* ... when used for *śṛṅgāra*, etc.?" The word is known to denote 'the taste of food', 'mercury', 'chemical', 'medicine', 'attribute of water'[21], etc. Then how does one explain the use of this word for aesthetic experience? Bharata answers – "By virtue of its being tasted/ 'tastable'". However, it is pointed out that knowledge/cognition born of the sense of taste (the tongue) is termed *āsvādana*, tasting. *Śṛṅgāra*, etc. are not experienced through the sense of taste, then how can it be termed *asvādana*? It is so because of the three-fold *sādṛśyatā*, similarity, between the experiencing/tasting of food and of the art experience. This similarity is along three dimensions: (i) of the experienced *bhogya*, (ii) of the experience *bhokta*, and (iii) of the fruit or effect *phala* of the experience. In properly prepared food, the different *padārthas* (constituent elements) produce a certain taste (*asvādyatā*). One who eats this food with concentrated mind (*ekāgratā*) alone experiences the taste and if one's mind is elsewhere while eating, there is no clear cognition[22] of the quality of taste. The fruit/effect of absorbing the 'taste' (of food) is delight, satisfaction, nourishment, strength and good health. One should understand the same about the *rasa* manifested by enactment (*abhinaya*). In the case of the focussed (*ekāgra*), absorbed (*tanmaya*) auditor, in the act of 'chewing' the *sthāyībhāva* (its *carvanā*), experiences its 'taste', *rasa*, the joyous knowledge of *kāma* or *dharma*, etc. and the ability gained from watching the enactment may be understood as the 'fruit'/ benefit (of art experience). Therefore, on account of the similarity of *kartā* (agent), *karma* (object) and *phala* ('fruit'), the special cognition arising from *vibhāva* etc. is described as the 'tasting-activity (*rasanā kriyā*) etc. and the experience on the analogy of 'taste' is called *rasa*. This is what Bharata Muni is indicating[23].

At this point, Abhinavagupta brings in an interesting point of view held by some scholars. The *bhoktā* (experiencer) according to them is intrinsically

21 *Amarkoṣa* 1.5.7,1.5.9, 1.7.17, 2.9.99, 3.3.227 (For details see, Kapil Kapoor and Nalini M. Ratnam, *Literary Theory. Indian Conceptual Framework*. Delhi: Affiliated East-West Press.1998.p.106).

22 Abhinavagupta uses the word *abhimāna* for this process, *abhimāna* also means, 'a special measurement'.

23 In the *anuvaṅśīya ślokas* after numbered as NS 6.32, 33. But these *ślokas* are handed down by the tradition (of *Nāṭyaśāstra* scholarship) and are not necessarily a part of the core text. Acārya Viśveśvara accepts them as *anuvanśīya*. (*Abhinavabhāratī ke Tīn Adhyāya*. Delhi. Delhi University 1960, p. 501.

tripartite – self (*ātmā*), act or faculty of tasting, (*rasnā*) and mind (*mana*) – but the *rasa* theory deals only with the act of tasting. Abhinavagupta reminds them of their own postulation that the self (*ātmā*) as a means of experience changes its location, transforms itself and 'occupies' / becomes / informs the mind (*mana*) and the mind in turn becomes *rasa-sthānīya*, that is becomes informed by the taste - in fact it itself tastes. Given this, he says, we should drop this argument. And then he quotes Bharata's *anuvaṁśīya śloka*: "... *sahṛdayā puruṣa*[24] tastes with his *mana* (mind)". More than the operation of the tongue, Abhinavagupta continues, it is the operation of the mind that is called the 'taste' (*asvādana*) of art-experience; this mental cognition is actually present and constitutes the 'relish' of *śṛṅgāra rasa*, etc. So the word *rasa* is used, Abhinavagupta says, in its primary denotative sense and not as a metaphor. In fact *drama*, *nāṭya* is nothing but a configuration (*samudāya*) of *rasas*.

And then an important extension is made. He says, *rasa* is present not only in *nāṭya*, *drama*, the *prekṣa*, visual, compositions but also in *kāvya*, the *śravya* (aural) narratives. He quotes his own teacher Bhaṭṭa Tauta who said that *rasa* is experienced even without enactment (*abhinaya*) in *sargabandha kāvya*, the highly structured long verbal compositions such as the epics. Abhinavagupta explicates – through the perfection (*vistāra*) and maturity (*prauḍhatā*) of the narrative style, the beautifully delineated gardens the luminosity of light, and the coolness of moon etc. are experienced as if they are actually present before one's eyes. The excellences of poetry, its images, the appropriate language, the action, the mode of articulation, the dress and the ornaments, all contribute to *rasa* realization. And he adds a little later – 'narratives are also forms of enactment'[25].

He sets up *kāvya* as a higher category – *kāvya* is 'verbal compositions' and it is classifiable into three (i) *daśarūpaka* (ten kinds of plays), (ii) *sargabandha*, structured long poems such as the epic, and (iii) *muktaka*, short, autonomous poems. Continuing with his comparison of dramatic and narrative poetry, in a statement reminiscent of what Aristotle says[26], Abhinavagupta says that those whose heart is pure like a mirror and on seeing or reading a play, unlike ordinary people, are not susceptible to anger, excitement and desire, are able to cognise the extraordinary experience even by merely listening to (or reading) a play.

But for the ordinary people to realize in themselves the extraordinary *rasa* – experience, Bharata established the modes of enactment, song and dance. That all should have this experience is important for, as Abhinavagupta adds, *drama* seeks the well being of all. Through this method, even ordinary people are able to experience *rasa*. This indicates that *rasa* is in *nāṭya*, enactment. Abhinavagupta adds, significantly, that *kāvya* is also *nāṭya* without its structural elements – evidently the great teacher has in mind the fact that as an evocation, *kāvya* involves enactment in the mind in the form of mental images. So there is *rasānubhūti* (*rasa*-experience) in *kāvya* (here, non-dramatic verbal composition) as well.

So, *rasa* is not in the performer, *naṭa* – how else would one explain *rasa* experience in non-dramatic compositions? *Naṭa* is also called '*pātra*', vessel. A vessel holds the drink whose taste is experienced by one who drinks. So also *naṭa* – he enables, facilitates the *rasa*–experience. This *rasa* therefore comes into being in the self of the auditor. Every other element in the totality of art experience is instrumental towards this realization of the experience in the self. In fact, Abhinavagupta sums up, experience of joyous, knowing self, *ātma*, which is *ānandamaya jñānasvarūpa* by definition, takes the form of *rasa*. For the constitution of that specific joy-permeated knowing self, the traces / impressions, the *sthāyībhāvas*, *rati*, *śoka* (grief), etc. are instrumental. This also explains why grief also gives joy in art experience.

This also establishes that *bhāvas* lead to *rasa* and not the other way round. This creates an apparent contradiction. It was said in the beginning that without *rasa* no meaning gets constituted and therefore one begins by expounding *rasa*. How does one reconcile these two – that *rasa* is primary and that *rasa* is the form that *bhāva* assumes? Explaining the *dṛṣṭānta* in the seventh *anuvaṁśīya śloka* attributed to Bharata, Abhinava says that *rasa* is like the seed of the *kāvya*-tree that integrates and makes sense of the whole composition and enables us to grasp the joy-permeated knowledge. This seed-*rasa* is planted in the poet and it is this poetic *rasa* (*kavigata rasa*) as different from the seed-*rasa* (*mūla rasa*) that the *naṭa*, performer, seeks to enact. After having cognized that poetic *rasa* (or *rasa* as grasped by the poet), the auditor through his

24 Use of the word *puruṣa* is the active, intelligent principle and as such equivalent of *ātmā*.

25 So there are elements of narrative is drama and the dramatic elements are moment in the narratives

26 Poetics 26. Aristotle makes a distinction between tragedy as a reading experience and as a performance and says that as theatre, tragedy is a lower form of art that appeals and makes sense to the common people while as a reading text, it needs a cultivated mind.

analytical intellect recognizes the *vibhāva*, etc. So the realization of the poet's *rasa* (*kavigata rasa*), instead of the seed-*rasa*, is enabled by *sthāyībhāva* etc. The process ay be understood as this:

Mūla rasa→

The Poet's standpoint: *Kavigata rasa*→*Kāvya with bhāva etc.*→

Kāvya rasa→

The Auditor's standpoint: *Kāvya rasa*→*Kāvya with bhāva etc*→

Kavigata rasa →

Mūla rasa

The poet is also like the auditor – he also constructs a *rasa*-experience in his self , cultivates his own understanding of the nature of the original experience and accordingly structures it and interprets it. Anandavardhana is quoted at this point to extend the argument – "If the poet is *śṛṅgārī*, that is if the poet's self is effulgent and beautiful, the whole *jagat*, all this enumerable reality becomes permeated by *rasa* (*rasa-maya*). And if the poet's self is devoid of *rasa*, the world becomes/appears *rasa*-less, dry." Abhinavagupta concludes with an analogy: the *kavigata rasa* functions like the seed for the tree and its fruit is the auditor's *rasa*". For the auditor, the whole tree is permeated by the *rasa* he experiences. And the same for the poet – as one who experiences a *rasa* in his heart, the whole world, *jagata* is *rasamaya*, permeated by *rasa*[27]. Notice, it is pointed out, that a bilateral relationship holds between the seed and the plant – the seed produced the plant and the plant produces the seed. In the same manner, *rasa* determines *vibhāva* etc., and *vibhāva* etc. evokes *rasa*.

After having cognized that poetic *rasa* (or *rasa* as grasped by the poet), the auditor through his analytical intellect recognizes the *vibhāva*, etc. So the realization of the poet's *rasa* (*kavigata rasa*), instead of the seed-*rasa*, is enabled by *sthāyībhāva* etc.

After this Abhinavagupta takes up *Nāṭyaśāstra kārikās* 32–38 and explains the inter-relationships among the eight *rasas*. Following Bharata, Abhinavagupta outlines that from the sources of the four basic *rasa*, the other four are also produced:

From:	*To:*
A. 1. śṛṅgāra	*B. 5. hāsya*
2. raudra	*6. karuṇa*
3. vīra	*7. adbhuta*
4. bībhatsa	*8. bhayānaka*

The terms used are (A) *utpādaka*, generators, and (B) *utpādya,* generated. What does this mean? This means that the factors of the base *rasa*, that would normally generate the basic rasa, generates instead the other *rasa*. What are the properties of this process of generation? It is pointed out that each generating relation between the generator and the generated differs from the other.

There are four kinds of generated - generator relationships. *Śṛṅgāra* to *hāsya* is the first kind of this relationship and is a relationship of *tadābhāsa*, (having the same appearance). Thus when the *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* and *vyabhicārī bhāva* required for *śṛṅgāra* are present, the *sthāyībhāva rati* becomes cognizable and is experienced as *śṛṅgāra*. But when it is only a semblance of *rati*, a mere desire (*carvaṇā mātra*), it will give merely the semblance of *śṛṅgāra*, mere *śṛṅgārābhāsa*. In that case, the function of *vibhāva* etc. gets re-defined and they may become instruments for a very different *rasa*, the *hāsya rasa*. In other words, in such a case, the final effect is quite different from what is expected. Example is given of Ravana's desire for Sita that may give the semblance of *rati*. Ravana displays his weakness for Sita who is the *ālambana vibhāva*. But the absence of mutuality (Sita is not drawn to him), Ravana's age and his auxiliary states of worry, self-pity and delusion and his mourning-*anubhāva* (contrary to his *prakṛti*), all these collectively being inappropriate (not *ucita*) are reduced to a mere appearances of themselves and get re-defined to function as *vibhāvas* of the *hāsya rasa* instead. The audience instead of being deeply moved

27 The *śruti* says *raso vai saḥ*

by this is merely amused by Ravana's state.

This is generation of another *rasa* through *tadābhāsa*, through a semblance of the *vibhāva*, etc. of the basic *rasa*. This process can transfer any of the eight *rasas* into *hāsya rasa*, as this 'inappropriateness', *anaucitya*, can afflict the *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* of any *rasa* and also the *vyabhicārīs*. This can affect *śānta rasa*, too, when *nirveda* which is the *sthāyībhāva* for *śānta rasa*, may have the semblance (*tadābhāsa*) of being a *hetu* for *mokṣa*, deliverance, the fourth end of life, in which case the *śānta rasa* will take the form of *hāsya*.

Thus if some one displays grief for one who is not dear to him, than being inappropriate, the *karuṇa rasa* becomes *hāsya*. So much so that even *hāsya* in conjunction with inappropriateness will only be *hāsyābhāsa* and may take some other form (say *bībhatsa*).

The second kind of relationship is one of necessary concomitance – that is, another *rasa* necessarily appears after the fruition of the first. Thus *raudra* is necessarily followed by *karuṇa*, for *raudra* involves, among others, killing and holding some one a prisoner and both these are causes for *karuṇa rasa*. Thus example is given of Bhima killing and drinking the blood of Duśāsana in *Mahābhārata*, an example of Bhima's *krodha*, the *sthāyībhāva* which leads to *raudra rasa*. But the *sthāyi* of *raudra* becomes *vibhāva* for *karuṇa*, for others, and mourning in the Kaurava camp necessarily follows.

The momentary sexual attraction between non-superior or non-young man and woman is not designated as *rati* or *śṛṅgāra* because only the long-enduring attraction inherent in *rati* is called *śṛṅgāra*.

In the same manner *raudra* is followed as a norm by *bhayānaka* and *śṛṅgāra*, after the death of one of the two in love, is necessarily followed by *karuṇa*. Even when both are alive but one is believed to be dead by the other, *karuṇa rasa* follows. Example is given of the king Udyana who experiences deep *karuṇa rasa* on being erroneously informed that his beloved Vāsavadattā has perished in fire.

In the same way *vīra rasa* is followed by *bhayānaka*.

The third kind of relationship of transference is one in which one *rasa* is organized/structured with another *rasa* as its fruition. Thus the *vīra rasa* may be depicted to find its fruition in *adbhuta rasa* (marvellous). *Raudra* always has as its *phala*, fruit, the destruction of the other and therefore *karuṇa* is never depicted as its fruit.

The fourth kind of transference / generation is when a *rasa* sharing the *vibhāva*, etc. with another *rasa*, invites intervention of that *rasa*. Example is the *vibhatsa* whose *vibhāva*, blood, etc. is the *vibhāva* for *bhayānaka rasa* also. Similarly, its auxiliaries, dying, delusion, unconsciousness, etc. and its *anubhāva* such as twisting/contracting one's mouth and lips are auxiliaries and *anubhāva* for *bhayānaka rasa* also. This is an example of co-mingling, *sahabhāva*, of *rasas*. Four *rasas* appear as *ākṣepa*, interventions - *karuṇa*, adbhuta, *śṛṅgāra* and *bhayānaka*.

All the above examples of *rasa*-transferance are subsumed under *kārya-kāraṇa bhāva* and can be grouped under four principles of transference– *anukaraṇa* (resembling, being similar), *kārya* (effect), *phala* (fruit') and *ākṣepa* (co-mingling, intervention). The four base *rasas* – *śṛṅgāra*, *vīra*, *raudra*, *bībhatsa* – are each, according to its substance, directed at the four ends of life –*artha*, *kāma*, *dharma*, and *mokṣa*.

These are the eight *rasas*, he says, and if *śanta* is included, nine.

After this Bharata's statement about the colour (*varṇa*) of *rasas* is explained. Each *rasa* has a colour. This is a part of the psychological-cultural dimension of *rasa* theory. Thus *śṛṅgāra* is *śyāma*, the colour of Lord Krishna. Is it because Krishna's love for Radha is the proto-paradigm of love? Or is it because when in the monsoon season, the dark clouds inhabit the skies, our hearts turn to love? Or, is love a 'dark' emotion? May be, all three. *Hāsya* is white, *karuṇa* of the colour of pigeons, dull blue, and *raudra* is red. *Vīra* is effulgent saffron, *bhayānaka* is dark (black), *bībhatsa* is indigo blue and *adbhuta* is yellow[28]. These colour-*rasa* associations have some relationship with rituals of worship; and in drama, these colours acquire semiotic value in the dress of the characters and of the backgrounds. *Śānta* is not counted here,

28 The psychic and cultural foundations of colours and *rasas* need to be explored and understood in more detail.

Abhinavagupta says, but those who believe in *Śānta* refer to the last part of the 43rd Bharata *kārikā* and say that the ochre colour of Viṣṇu/Kriṣṇa is the colour of *śānta rasa*.

Next we have the specifically cultural marking of the different *rasas* in the form of presiding deities. Each *rasa* has a presiding deity, the deity that best illustrates/embodies the *rasa*. For success in evoking a particular *rasa*, on the stage or in the *kāvya*, the presiding deity of the *rasa* is offered prayer (*pūjā*). Viṣṇu in his form of Kāmadeva is the lord of *śṛṅgāra rasa*. The group of playful followers who serve Śiva are the deities of *hāsya rasa*. Rudra, one of the eleven forms of Śiva, is the deity of *raudra rasa*. Rudra is the destroyer of the three worlds and is the one who impels Yamarāja, the deity of death, to kill the mortal beings. Yamarāja therefore is the deity of *karuṇa rasa*. Mahākāla another form of Śiva is the deity of *vībhatsa rasa* as he is supposed to inhabit the cremation grounds. Kāla[29], yet another form of Śiva is the deity of *bhayānaka rasa* which shares its *vibhāvas* with *vībhatsa*. Mahendra India as king, a known warrior god, is the deity of *vīra rasa*. Brahma who is *acintya*, not amendable to mental reflection, one who cannot be perceptualised, is the deity of *adbhuta rasa*.

Why is *śṛṅgāra rasa* mentioned first in Bharata Muni's *rasa* enumeration? This is the first question. Why the primacy? It is mentioned first because it is the *phala* ('fruit') of *kāma*, one of the *puruṣārtha*s and it is dear to all human beings.

Again, it is noted that Bharata does not mention the deity of *śānta rasa*. Abhinavagupta says according to some Buddha, a man of knowledge always preoccupied with the welfare of others, is the deity of *śānta rasa*.

Notice that Śiva in its three forms is the deity of three of the eight *rasa*s – *raudra*, *bībhatsa*, and *bhayānaka*. Śiva is the lord of dance, music and language and therefore is a deity for all the arts. Also notice that *śānta rasa* is not part of the core theory. And yet, it is pervasive in Indian thought and popular thinking – we always talk of *nava rasa*s, nine *rasa*s. Portrayal of the *nine rasa*s forms the substance of Indian art.

Abhinavagupta concludes this part of the discussion by saying that no more need be said about the generation of one *rasa* from another or about colour and deity of the different *rasa*. As *rasa*s are mutually contingent on each other, nothing definitive can be said about the inter-changes of *rasa*s and as Vedas are the authority for colour and deity of *rasa*, no more exposition is required.

In the next part of the discussion, *rasa*s are characterised by distinguishing them from each other.

Abhinavagupta begins by saying that before one separates members of a class from each other by *viśeṣa lakṣaṇa* (specific characteristics) one has to separate the class from other classes by *sāmānya lakṣaṇa* (general characteristics). The discussion seeks to characterise each *rasa* by identifying their distinguishing characteristics, the features that distinguish each of them from the other *rasa*s[30].

Why is *śṛṅgāra rasa* mentioned first in Bharata Muni's *rasa* enumeration? This is the first question. Why the primacy? It is mentioned first because it is the *phala* ('fruit') of *kāma*, one of the *puruṣārthas* and it is dear to all human beings.

In the prose that follows, Bharata expands on the idea: "In these (*rasa*s), *śṛṅgāra rasa* arises from, is directed towards the *sthāyībhāva*, *rati*. It is bright-appareled (*ujjwala veṣātmaka*). Whatever in this world is auspicious (*śuci*), pure (*medhya*), luminous (*ujjwala*) and worthy of being seen/cognised (*darśanīya*) it is designated/named as *śṛṅgāra*. Just as people are given names on the bases of parental or maternal traditions or worldly usage, the elements of *nāṭya*, *rasa*, *bhāva* and others, bear names given by wise sages based on tradition and function."

Abhinavagupta constitutes a question here: as *rasa* is something to be experienced, and not sensory, how does one understand its description as *ujjwala veṣātmaka* (bright appareled, luminous)? *Śṛṅgāra*, he says, is shown to be ornamented by beauty, an element of visibility, and at the same time its

29 *Kāla* is time and suggests decay and death of everything with the passage of time. *Mahākāla* is the cosmic time in which the entire universe hangs: both are forms of Śiva. While *kāla* is associated with mortal beings, *Mahākāla* is cosmic. There is a temple to *Mahākāla* in Ujjain, India.

30 We will only consider here Abhinavagupta's charactersation of the *śṛṅgāra rasa*.

similarity to auspiciousness and purity, non-material qualities, is laid down. How does one establish coherence between these two?

In other words, the use of the word *śṛṅgāra* appears non-coherent. Abhinavagupta says that this is a case of extended usage (of the word *śṛṅgāra*) on the basis of non-difference between the object of comparison (*upameya*), *rasa* in this case, and the object with which it is compared (*upamāna*), 'the bright apparel' in this case. These extensions come about through the convention of word-use by teachers or thinkers in the tradition. Technical terms of *śāstras*, philosophical systems, are similarly extended, Abhinavagupta points out, to acquire non-technical signification. He gives the example, among others of the *Sāṁkhya* term *puruṣa* that stands for the active, alert, 'energy' principle but is used in common usage to refer to 'man'. He says that the word *śṛṅgāra* is primarily used for *rasa* but in *loka*, worldly usage, its use for 'bright appareled', for example, is *aupacārika*, a convention of usage[31].

But more importantly, Abhinavagupta interprets these words to give a definition to the nature of experience denoted by *śṛṅgāra*. He says that in life a person who experiences *rati* develops a weakness for the object of his desire, the beloved. But this is transient and does not endure for long. So, only the experience born of *rati* that is worthy is called *śṛṅgāra*. To be worthy, the *vibhāvas* have to be worthy. In *śāstras*, Abhinavagupta points out, everything that is non-proscribed (*aniṣidha*), not condemned (*anindita*) and attractive to the heart (*manohara*) is denoted by the word *śṛṅgāra*. So the *bhāva* has to be 'bright-appareled', luminous, 'sublime' for it to be denoted by the word *śṛṅgāra* – not something just ordinary, just vulgar. As Bharata has said, whatever is auspicious, pure ... is *śṛṅgāra*.

So the human experience of love, *rati*, that is *śṛṅgāra*, is necessarily 'sublime'—it cannot be merely physical, a bond that seeks physical gratification. Nor is it a transient bond for it to be sublime. It is necessarily a bond that lasts forever – *cirasthāyī pratīti*. It is basically an emotion that arises between a man and a woman of 'superior nature'. By 'superior nature', Abhinavagupta explains, one means a high degree of sensitivity, a refined sensibility (*saṁvedana śakti*). If it is not mutual, and if it is merely momentary physical desire, it is *rati* no doubt but not one that will evoke *śṛṅgāra*. As a momentary experience, it can only be an auxiliary state (*vyabhicārī bhāva*), not a *sthāyībhāva*. Abhinavagupta explicitly says:

"The momentary sexual attraction between non-superior or non-young man and woman is not designated as *rati* or *śṛṅgāra* because only the long-enduring attraction inherent in *rati* is called *śṛṅgāra*."

Further, the *rasa* experience begins the moment a proper conjunction of *vībhāvas* presents itself and does not wait for any 'fulfillment' to be achieved. Hence *śṛṅgāra* is experienced even when the lovers are separated. In fact there are two states of love, union and separation and in art, the highest form of love-experience, *śṛṅgāra*, is one where the joy of being together is laced with actual or feared separation. This is so in life and also in art. There is one difference, however - what is an actual experience in life is only a *mānasika bhāvanā* in art. It is all an enactment, an image making. The auditor cognizes the experience and this cognition (*anubhūti*) itself is *rasa*. But in a way it is not really different. The observer in life is the auditor of art and the process of *rasa* experience is the same for both.

One final doubt remains to be clarified once again. *rasa* theory is articulated from the point of view of the auditor (*sāmājika*). It is the auditor who experiences *rasa*. But this *rati*-founded *rasa* is basically in the *anukārya*, in the object (s) of representation. In life also it is the same - the observer experiences what empathetically he observers happening to others. The question is - is the auditor's/observer's *rasa*-experience different from that of those, the *anukārya*, whose experience is being enacted, is the objects of observation? The answer is, no. Though the substrata differ, the experience with all its factors is the same for the *anukārya* (the object of representation) and the *sāmājika* (the auditor). The true *rasa*-experience arising from a special conjunction (*ekaviyoga*) of the experiencer and the auditor allows of no *bheda* in the *rasa*-cognition of the two.

The primacy of *śṛṅgāra* has been argued at length by *Bhojarāja* who argues that since every human action emanates from self-love, love, *śṛṅgāra*, is the source-*rasa*. Bhoja in his own way was trying to understand the significance of enumerating *śṛṅgāra* in the first place. Both *vātsalya* and *bhakti* that were later argued as independent *rasas* are in fact modulations of *śṛṅgāra*. In the philosophic tradition, *kāma* is one of

31 Abhinavagupta shows that the efforts to etymologically derive the word śṛṅgāra to explain its meaning are misplaced as the word cannot be derived by any rules and has to be treated as an idiosyncratic form generated by Pāṇini's *sūtras* designed for such idiosyncratic forms and called *uṇādi sūtras*.

the ends of life and is denotative of desires including physical[32]. Sexuality has been recognized as the most powerful human drive and its deleterious effects on personal relations and social cohesion have also been clearly understood. Indian thought therefore seeks to bridle sexuality and Indian aesthetics, therefore, governed as it as elsewhere in other cultures by the community's world-view, defined and articulated *śṛṅgāra rasa*, the state of being in love as a *cirasthāyī pratīti*, an enduring state of being and not as one that would naturally come to an end with physical fulfillment. There is no doubt that the paradigm is *rati*, the love between a man and a woman but it is interpreted as no different from the relationship between man and his god in *bhakti rasa*. For what is common to both is reverence or adoration of the object of love – even in human love, the lover wishes only the best for the beloved, his affection being directed towards the welfare of the object of his love and necessarily involving complete self-denial. It is a state of the two souls becoming one so that it does not matter whether the two are together or not. There is a kind of purity, a beauty born of selflessness and total surrender of the self, that characterises what is popularly called 'true love'.

Abhinavagupta, thus explains[33] at length the nature of love (*śṛṅgāra*). The four ends of life govern the aesthetic experience of different states of being, particularly love, joy, courage and wonder. The experience born of *rati*, physical attraction, that is 'effulgent' and 'worthy of reverence' is called *śṛṅgāra*, love. "Whatever in this world is pure, effulgent and worthy of being seen or experienced is compared to *śṛṅgāra*, love", he says. Born as it is of attraction for the other person and dear as it is to the heart of man, its chief marker is *kāma*, desire. The object of desire, the beloved or the lover, is called *śṛṅgārī*. The intoxication of the person who has weakness for the source of that desire though actually experienced in life does not last for a long time. So the impulse towards a worthy object is called love. In intellectual texts (*śāstra*) and in the world, whatever is un-proscribed, un-condemned, and beautiful (that captures the mind) is subsumed under *śṛṅgāra* but in art it is restricted to the worthy state generated in a worthy person by his desire for a worthy object. In art, it is the representation of that desire rid of its grossness and mere physicality that creates an effulgent and ennobling experience. It is the experience of ultimate union (*param bhoga*) of two worthy (*uttama*) persons of deep sensitivity mutually lost in each other. It is only then that the mutual love is enduring, *cirasthāyī pratīti* - if it were not so, the sexual fulfillment would terminate it. *śṛṅgāra* is endless desire and endless fulfillment.

He elucidates the concept of love to harmonise it with his own transcendental metaphysics. Breathing, he says is only an apparent sign of life in a human being; the real spring of life is love. It is in itself a fulfillment, it does not have a fulfillment outside itself; gross sexual fulfillment in fact terminates it. Abhinava goes beyond this and argues that the primary, the source psychological state is the *śānta rasa* the peace that pervades the self and all states are subsidiary to this for the ultimate goal of life is liberation from suffering and that comes from renunciation, a selfless renunciation. Love therefore is an act of renunciation, worship, an act of devotion and reverence for only an object of reverence is beautiful. Such love is fair, pure and beautiful. Such is the legendary love of Radha and Krishna. The entire philosophy of love and life is enshrined in this perennial narrative that celebrates the love of the village girl, Radha, and the extraordinary cowherd Lord Krishna, celebrated in that extraordinary 12th century poem, *Gīta Govinda* by Jayadeva.

Śṛṅgāra-rasa has two states (*avasthā*): (i) union (*saṁyoga*), and (ii) seperation (*vipralambha*). Abhinavagupta notes that in union, there is fear of separation and in separation, there is hope of union. In this way, the beauty of *śṛṅgāra* rests in the commingling of the two *saṁyoga* and *vipralambha*. The *vibhāva* for the two is also the same. But the same *vibhāva* can lead to *saṁyoga* and *vipralambha*. *Vipralambha*, separation, since it involves grief, comes very close to *Karuṇa rasa*. The two share auxiliary states such as cintā (painful reflection) etc. What, then, separates *vipralambha śṛṅgāra* from *karuṇa rasa*? For one, *śoka*, grief, is the *sthāyībhāva* for *karuṇa*? In *śṛṅgāra* it is *rati*. And the separation of the lovers in *vipralambha śṛṅgāra* is not irreversible and there is always an element of hope of union. But in *karuṇa rasa*, the separation on account of death, etc. is irreversible and there is no hope - instead there is *nirpekṣabhāva*, a certain detachment and helpless indifference. Deep grief, the *sthāyībhāva* for *karuṇa rasa* arises from what is called *śāpa* or *śrāpa* – a curse from which there is no escape and that leaves no room

32 But in social life also, Indian thought seeks to regulate the sexual desire through self-restraint and by restricting sex to marriage for purposes of procreation. "I am the sexual desire that leads to procreation"- *Bhagvad-Gītā* 10.28

33 The discussion that follows is from *Abhinavabhāratī* on *Nāṭyaśāstra*, 6.34-40.

for countering it. A deep helplessness overpowers the experiencers leading to deep grief. If it happens to two persons in love, it is then *karuṇa rasa* and not *śṛṅgāra*.

Although, as we have noted in section IV, that Bharata does not enjoin the colour (*varṇa*) and the deity (*devatā*) for the *śānta rasa*, yet in his prose comment following *kārikā* 83 of *Nāṭyaśāstra*, he give an exposition of *śānta rasa*. He discusses it separately from the other eight *rasa* because, in his understanding, it is above and beyond them in that he considers the state of *śānta rasa*, a deep peace and harmony in the self, as the *prakṛta*, natural, given state of man into which all of us are born and all the *rasa*s as *vikāra*, deviations from that state and life a constant struggle to regain that original state. Also, he is aware of the controversy surrounding *śāntā rasa*, that not every one accepts *śānta* as a *rasa* because, according to them, it does not fall into the structure of the *rasa* - theory.

Abhinavagupta in his exposition of Bharata's *kārikās* argues elaborately and convincingly that *śānta rasa* must be accepted as a separate, ninth *rasa*.

This is the structure of *śānta rasa* according to Bharata Muni's prose comment:

vibhāva *tattvajñāna* *cittaśuddhi* (True knowledge, renunciation, purification of *(citta)*	*śama* *sthāyībhāva*	*vyabhicārī* *(nirveda), smṛti* (recollection) *dhṛti* (contentment), *śauca* (purity), *stambha* (paralysis), *romāñca* (horripilation)
anubhāva *yama, niyama, dhāraṇā, upāsanā,* mercy on all living beings, *sannyāsa dhāraṇā* (restraint, discipline, meditation on self, austerity, devotion,		*abhinaya*
		sāttvikabhāva

Bharata says[34]:

"Generator of *mokṣa* (deliverance from here and new) and spiritual self-relisation (*adhyātamasākśātkāra*), informed by *tattvajñāna* (knowledge of what is), instrumental in the realisation of *mokṣa*, the *rasa* called *śānta* is the ninth *rasa*s.

"This *śānta rasa* should be understood as that which is attainable by those who have mastered the senses of knowledge and of action and as that which promotes the happiness and well-being of all living beings.

"Where there is no sorrow, no joy, no envy, no jealousy, that state of equanimity in all beings is well-known as *śāntā rasa*."

And then in *kārikā*s 87, 88, Bharata lays down his key principle one in which all the arguments of Abhinavagupta end :–

"The *sthayībhāva*s such as *rati* of all the *bhāva*s are kinds of *vikāra*, deviations, and *śānta rasa* is the natural state (*prakṛtirūpa*) of all of them. *Vikāra*, deviant/marked states (*rasa*s), take birth in that base of *śānta rasa* and in the end are absorbed in that itself.

"With the means/instruments (*vībhāva*) etc. becoming available, *rati* etc. states (*bhāva*) take shape in the *śānta rasa*[35] and when the means are no longer present, they are re-absorbed in the *śānta rasa*.

"In this manner those who know dramaturgy accept nine *rasa*s."

But many scholars do not accept *śānta rasa* as a *rasa*s and give a number of arguments -

(i) *śama*, the proposed *sthāyībhāva* and *śānta* are synonymous;

(ii) only 49 *bhāvas* have been enjoined by the *Ācārya* – there is no room for the fiftieth *śama*;

(iii) *vībhāva* such as the spring season and flowers, for the *śṛṅgāra rasa* are cognizable as causes for the consequent *rasa*s but austerity (*tapa*) and self-restraint (*svādhyāya*) are not cognisable in the state of *śānta* or *śama*;

(iv) *śanta rasa* cannot be incorporated in drama became it cannot be acted as *śama*, the *sthāyībhāva*, means cessation of action, of all effort,

(v) *dhṛti* cannot be an appropriate auxiliary for *śānta rasa* as it stands for satisfaction that follows the enjoyment of objects of senses;

(vi) a person who is stabilised in *śama*, will not do any effort, not even for gaining *tattvajñāna* (knowledge of things as they are) necessary preliminary for abstinence from action.

Abhinavagupta starts with a general argument. Just as the cognition (*cittavṛttis*) such as *rati* that are instruments in the promotion of the three ends of life are made experiencable as *rasa*s, the cognition, *cittavṛtti*, that promotes the fourth end of life, *mokṣa*,

34 In *kārikā* 84 (in *āryā chanda*) and in *kārikās* 85-88.
35 Like storms in the sea or waves in the river.

should also be made experiencable as *śānta rasa* and that *cittavṛtti*, its *sthāyībhāva*, *nirveda* can in fact be experienced in the enactment.

So *śānta rasa* has to be accepted as a matter of general principle. But the central problems remains – what is the *sthāyībhāva* of *śānta rasa*? Three positions are available in the tradition: (i) the most widely accepted position is that indifference/detachment, *nirveda*, is the *sthāyībhāva*; (ii) each of the eight *rasa*s function as *sthāyībhāva*, and (iii) all the eight *rasa*s togethers function as the *sthāyībhāva*.

Abhinavagupta reports a prolonged controversy about *nirveda* as the *sthāyī* for *śānta rasa*. *Nirveda* is the first of the *vyabhicārī bhāva*s and as such can function both as *sthāyī* and as *vyabhicārī*. Secondly, *nirveda* supersedes all the *sthāyībhāva*s in that it means the end of all *bhāva* and therefore *nirveda* bom of proper knowledge (*tattvajñāna*) is to be accepted as the *sthāyī* of *śānta rasa*. The problem with this view is the inter relationship of *tattvajñāna*, *vairājña*, *nirveda* and *mokṣa*. As proper knowledge *tattvajñāna* is the cause of *vairājña* and *vairājña* is the cause of *mokṣa*, the cause of cause cannot be the *vibhāva* for *mokṣa* / *śānta*. It is also said that the causal order is different – it is *vairājña* that leads to *tattvajñāna* which is the same as *nirveda*. That is, proper knowledge *tattvajñāna* is the effect (*kārya*) not cause (*kāraṇa*) of *vairājña* which is the *sthāyī* for *śānta rasa* - it is seen in life also that those who have knowledge renounce things. Thus the causal relationship proposed is:

tattvajñāna → (*vairājña* or *nirveda*) → *śānta*

But Abhinavagupta says that this kind of detachment or *vairājña* is itself in fact the highest form of knowledge. Patañjali Muni is quoted[36] to have said that this highest form of knowledge is itself the highest kind of renunciation or detachment. Therefore, not *nirveda* but *tattvajñana* itself is the *sthāyī* of *śānta rasa*:

tattvajñāna → *sthāyībhāva*

Nirveda that is said to result from *tattvajñāna* is a kind of regretful indifference towards a life long experience that is now seen as a mere illusion. The argument that *nirveda* as the end of false knowledge is the same as *vairājña* is countered by the assertion that *nirveda* and *vairājña* are two different things – *nirveda* is the extension of a cognition amounting to grief (over the fact of having been driven by illusions) while *vairājña* is the end of all *bhāva*s of involvements. But *vairājña*, in this structure of argument cannot be clearly accepted as the direct cause of *mokṣa* as it appears in the middle of the chain:

tattvajñāna→ end of the flow→ *vairājña*→ *mokṣa*
of involvement in (detachment)
sorrows and joys
of life false knowledge)

That *śānta rasa* cannot be enacted; or, that there is nothing to enact in *śānta rasa*, is no problem as even in the *śṛṅgāra* in both its forms – union and separation – when it reaches its ultimate intensity, there is so much absorption in the heart, that there is nothing external to enact.

Further *nirveda* (or *vairājña*) born of *tattvajñāna* is the same as *śama* and therefore *śama* should be accepted as the *sthāyī* for *śānta* (as Bharata has indicated). The original objection that *śama* and *śānta* are synonymous is now dismissed on the ground that even in the original theory the *sthāyībhāva hāsya* generates the synonymous *hāsya rasa*. In any case the 'object - means' distinction (*siddha-sādhaka*) with one of them ordinary (means or *sthāyī*) and the other extra-ordinary (*alaukika*, the *rasa*s) imposes the necessary differences between the two.

There is the second view, which claims that all the eight *rati* etc. *sthāyībhāva*s when they are evoked by extraordinary *vibhāva*s lead to an extraordinary cognition (*anubhūti*). Thus each one of them can function as the *sthāyībhāva* for *śānta rasa* – for example, nourished by man-woman, etc., *rati* is the source of *śṛṅgāra*, when nourished by thoughts and discussions of *adhyātama*, the same *rati* is the source of spiritualised self. Thus when one is stabilised in the love (*rati*) for one's inner self (*ātmā*), then it becomes a means of *mokṣa*. The Gīta says: "One who is involved only in the inner self, experiences joy only in the *ātmā*, he is left with no duty to perform[37]."

In the same way extraordinary causal experience

36 *Yogasūtra*, I.16.
37 *Gīta*, 3.17.

(*vibhāva*) can make each of the other *sthāyībhāva*s, the *sthāyī* for *śānta rasa*. Examples of these extra-ordinarily evoked *sthāyībhāvas* are: *hāsya* arising from an awareness of something wanting in all objects of the world; *krodha*, anger, arising from finding all the world hostile to well-being of *jīva*; *utsāha* arising from considering life as endless source of knowledge; *bhaya* at feeling helpless in this overwhelming world; *jugupsā* from finding ill-will and ugliness and developing distaste for it, and *vismaya* wonder seeing everything and everyone as an image of one's self or of the universal self.

It is noted that Bharata does allow for extraordinary *vibhāvas* by adding '*ādi*'[38], etc. to his statement of *vibhāva* for each *sthāyībhāva*.

As the *sthāyībhāva*s of all *rasas* can function as *sthāyī*s for *śāntā rasa*, it is not possible to determine just one *sthāyībhāva* for *śānta rasa*. This will also lead to different kinds of *śānta rasa* which militates against the accepted theoretical position in the theory that *rasa* is *akhaṇda* (undifferentiated, indivisible).

According to the third position all *sthāyībhāvas* together function as *sthāyī* for *śānta rasa*, as is the case in the taste of a cooked dish. But this appears to be an invalid position because all the *cittavṛttis* cannot co-occur together and also because some of these such as *hāsya* and *krodha* (anger) and *śoka* (grief) are contradictory. So this view is also not acceptable.

So we are back with the question – what is the *sthāyībhāva* of *śānta rasa*? Abhinavagupta now states his own view in a very carefully considered statement:

"First thing that needs to be said in this context is that *tattvajñāna* is the means of *mokṣa* and therefore it should be accepted as the *sthāyībhāva* of *śānta rasa*. *Tattvajñāna* is the name for *ātmajñāna* (self-knowledge or knowledge of the self). Knowledge of the self (*ātmā*) as different from the knowledge born of senses (*indriyajñāna*) is called *ātmajñāna*. This knowledge of that self, that is being in the presence of one's self, *ātmasākṣātkāra* or *tattvajñāna* is the *sthāyībhāva* of *śānta rasa*. My teacher, Sri Bhaṭṭa Tauta has established this at great length. And I have myself explained it at great length elsewhere (in the commentary on *Bhagvadgītā*). So I am not dwelling on it here. So, *ātmā*, the self, endowed with unalloyed properties (*viśudha dharma*) such as knowledge (and) joy (*jñāna* and *ānanda*) and devoid of the constructed 'sense-object-experience' (*viṣaya bhoga*, consumption/experience of objects of senses), takes the form of *sthāyībhāva* for *śānta rasa*."

One may ask whether self, *ātmā*, is not involved as *sthāyībhāva* in other *rasas* as well. This is asked because the self is the experiencer. Abhinavagupta says that in the experience of other *rasas*, the self is not experienced in its autonomous, unalloyed form. The self, in those cases, is the substratum for the *sthāyībhāvas* of other *rasa*s. But *tattvajñāna*, the substratum for all *bhāva*, is more enduring. *Sthāyī*, than all the rest and when it appears by itself as the *sthāyībhāva*, than *rati* etc., the *sthāyī*s for other *rasa*s, function as auxiliaries (*vyābhicārī*). It is self-validated (*svayamsiddha*). But (as it is also the substratum, against which other *sthāyībhāvas* constitute themselves) it has not been enumerated separately as a *sthāyībhāva*.

Then why enumerate the *śānta rasa* separately? It is enumerated separately because it is an experience different from that of the other *rasa*s. Moreover, the perception of the cognition of one's self (in *śānta rasa*) is not a matter of ordinary experience (*laukika pratīti*). In ordinary experience, and also when the deep, single-pointed concentration fails, the self always appears mixed with, enmeshed with, other *bhāvas*. So in ordinary experience, the self is not experienced by itself. But in *śānta rasa*, the self is cognized / experienced autonomously through extra-ordinary apperception. Hence, *śāntā rasa* is enumerated separately.

Bharata does not designate this pure form of the self (*ātmasvarūpa*) by the words *śama* and *nirveda*. These two are specific *cittavṛttis* – cognitions that take shape in the self – but are not the native self. So they are not the *sthāyī* for *śānta rasa* – only the unalloyed self (*ātmasvarūpa*) is the *sthāyībhāva*. This unallowed self that is grasped takes the form of *tattrajñāna* or *samatā* (peace, *śānti* or *mokṣa*). All the worldly, ordinary, and extraordinary cognitions become auxiliaries (*vyābhicārī*s). The other *rasas*-*sthāyībhāvas* also function as auxiliary (*vyābhicārī*) *bhāvas*. The experiences of *tattvajñāna* in the form of control of the senses (*yama*) and discipline (*niyama*) function as *anubhāva* of *śānta rasa*. And what Bharata discusses as natural enactment (*svabhāvābhinaya*) in chapters 9, 10 and 11 of *Nāṭyaśāstra* also concerns *śānta rasa*. This *śānta rasa* is called *svabhāva* (the native self). That is, *śanta rasa* is native and natural (*svābhāvika*); the other *rasa*s are deviant / marked forms of this[39]. The

38 See, for example, Bharata's prose statement of *vibhāva* of *śṛṅāgra rasa* that follows *kārikā* 45, Chapter 6, *Nāṭyaśāstra*.

39 As we said earlier, they are like storms in the sea of pure consciousness or like waves in a river.

blessing of and devotion to *īśvara* (god) etc. are the *vibhāva* for *śānta rasa* and in this *rati* (love) etc are also experienced as they dissolve in the *śānta rasa*. Desire, effort and enthusiasm to do good to others is especially integral to *śānta rasa*. And because after having gained knowledge of the self and of the universal self, no further duty remains to be performed, the *sādhaka*, the devotee-protagonist is ready even to give his life for the welfare of others and his death, etc. is not contradictory to *śānta rasa*[40]. While for the ordinary people protection of one's life is enjoined as the law, for the ascetics (*sannyāsins*), protecting life is not the enjoined goal for as Abhinavagupta puts it so beautifully:

"Man's life is for the protection of *dharma* (righteousness), *artha* (material well-being), *kāma* (righteous desires) and *mokṣa* (deliverances). One who destroys them, what has he not destroyed (that is, has in fact destroyed everything) and one who protects them, what has he not protected (that is, he has protected all, everything)."

"One who gives up one's life for others, whether a soldier or an ascetic, is a *tattvajñānī* and he gains *mokṣa*. Unlike the Vedāntins, Abhinavagupta says that those who have the right knowledge, *tattvajñāna*, are able to attain *mokṣa* in every *aśrama* of life and this has been said in *śruti* (Vedic literature) and *smṛti* (technical treatises)". Thus Abhinavagupta says –

"The *gṛhastha* (house holder), given to offering prayers to gods, possessor of *tattvajñāna*, treating guests with great respect, giving away his possession in charities after performing memorial service to his ancestors, also attains *mokṣa*".

The only difference is that those who work for the welfare of others with a view to gaining merit, such as Bodhisattva, and possess right knowledge are seen to be re-born attaining a body and birth that is worthy of them.

That *śānta rasa* cannot be enacted; or, that there is nothing to enact in *śānta rasa*, is no problem as even in the *śṛṅgāra* in both its forms – union and separation – when it reaches its ultimate intensity, there is so much absorption in the heart, that there is nothing external to enact. There is in such state *vyāpāraśunyatā* (absence of action). The same *tanmayatā* (total absorption) as marks the lovers' intensity also marks the *śānta rasa*. Just as the ultimate experience of *rati-śṛṅgāra* is attained after all desires are quietened, in the same way the ultimate experience of all *rasas* is not in the involvement with the objects of these *rasas* but in the indifference to or detachment from those objects. And as *śānta rasa* is born of detachment/ indifference to all object, it is the *prakṛti*, the source substance of all *rasas*. And since it inheres in all, it is general and therefore it is not counted separately but for one who understands and has the discriminating intellect, the experience/cognition of the *sthāyībhāva* is something distinct.

The nine *rasas*, Abhinavagupta concludes are listed in *itihāsa*, *purāṇa*, *Abhidhānakoṣa*[41] and in the *Pratyabhijña* philosophy. This shows that philosophers and sages accept *śānta rasa*. Renunciation and giving up the world are its *vibhāva*. Reflection on *mokṣa-śāstra* (texts dealing with *mokṣa*, upaniṣads etc. are its *anubhāva*, effects. Detachment, remembrances, contentment are its auxiliary *bhāva*. Therefore *bhakti*, devotion/worship marked by great effort directed towards the object of devotion (*iśvara praṇidhāna*) and informed by remembrance, contentment and joy is a part of the *śānta rasa* and for this reason *bhaktirasa* had not been enumerated separately. For gaining *mokṣa*, enabled by *tattvajñāna*, *śānta rasa* has as its fruit the release from all the bondages of this life.

In the presence of their own specific causes all *sthāyībhāvas* rise/form in the pervasive state of *śānta* and when the *kāraṇa*, cause, the *nimitta*, instrument is no longer there, they dissolve in the *śānta rasa* itself. So, Bharata, Abhinavagupta concludes, says that *śanta* is the source (*prakṛti*) of all *rasas*.

We have travelled with Abhinavagupta in his journey through the *rasa-siddhantā* of Bharata. In the exposition, Abhinavagupta underlines many important dimensions of this theory.

It has been said that *rasa* is endowed with *jñāna*, knowledge, and *ānanda*, joy or bliss. This is the character of art-experience. It is a discourse of knowledge laced with bliss. *Rasa* itself is defined as a *cittavṛtti*, a state of consciousness, a cognitive state in which knowledge is inflected by bliss. And knowledge enshrined and communicated in *nāṭya* and *kāvya* is valid knowledge, *samyaka jñāna*. This is why Bharata Muni used the expression *vedasammitaḥ nāṭyavedaḥ* (1.4), (having the authority of Veda), and *nāṭyavedam* (NS I.15, 16) and

40 The Bodhisattva in *Jātaka* stories gives away his life to protect other beings.

41 *Itihāsa*, the epic *Mahābhārata*; *Purāṇas*, records of ancient events – There are 18 major *Purāṇas*. *Abhidhānakoṣa* are lexions that list names.

vedam pañcamam (NS I.12). This is a key theoretical position in Indian theory of art – that art, specifically the verbal art, has as a discourse of knowledge the same status as the Vedas.

Abhinavagupta dwells on this in his exposition of the first chapter of *Nāṭyaśāstra* and explains why *nāṭya* is considered to have the authority of Vedas. It is said that Bharata created the *nāṭyaveda* (I. 4). *Nāṭyavedam* (I. 15, 16) is a compound that signifies that the *Nāṭyaśāstra* was constituted by Brahmā by drawing upon the Vedas – the text (*pāṭha*), the thought, is taken from *Ṛgveda*, music and song from *Sāmaveda*, performance (*abhinaya*) from *Yajurveda* and *rasa* from the *Atharvaveda*. It also stands for ten kinds of plays (*Daśarūpaka*). According to other commentators, it means: "Veda, as a deity of the universe of words, has taught what should be done and what should be given up and accepting that as worthy of being taught through enactment, I (Bharata) shall expound the *Nāṭyaśāstra*".

Then Abhinavagupta admiringly quotes Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka to give another, more profound and authoritative, interpretation of this statement:

"That which Brahmā presented as an analogy (*udāharaṇa*). That is, that which has been made an example/analogy to understand this *jagat* characterised by difference (*bheda*), constructed by (our) *avidyā*, ignorance, and without substance, (*sāra*), I (Bharata) shall expound that:

"In a play, (Rāma, Ravaṇa, etc.) purely fictive/imaginative and therefore not stabilised in one given from, undergoing innumerably changes (in innumerable performances) and more extraordinary than even a dream[42], yet drawing attracting the viewers' hearts, enacted by a Brahmā-like *naṭa* (performer)[43], the Rāma-Ravaṇa action becomes wondrously perceptible. And even as such, it becomes a means for attaining *puruṣārthas*, the ends of life. In the same way, this *jagata* is also an unreal (*asatya*) name-form construct (*asatya nāma-rūpa prapañcātmaka*) and yet through experience and meditation (*śravaṇa*, *manana*) it is instrumental in the attainment of the ends of life. And through the enactment of the ultimate end of life, *mokṣa*, it facilitates *śanta rasa* also."

Abhinavagupta again quotes Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka[44] on this world itself being a *nāṭaka*, a play:

"My obeisance to the great poet Śaṅkara (Lord Śiva) because people inhabiting the world experience *rasa* in this *jagat-rūpa-nāṭaka* (play in the form of all this world) structured/composed by him".

For the reason that *nāṭya* is an analogue of this world and instrumental in the instruction of the Vedic values, the reader or the auditor of drama gains the same end/fruit as the scholar of Vedas or a charitable house holder.

Like the vedas, *nāṭaka* also instructs in *kartavya-akartavya*, duty and what is not duty. The varied characters enacted through various *rasa*s manifested in the enactment enter the hearts of the auditors and generate an intellact conducive to actions that promote the four ends of life and an intellect that abstains from wrong doing.

Therefore, because, *nāṭya* like Vedas imparts instruction (*upadeṣa*), is another reason, it is referred to as 'Veda'. But there is a difference. Not everyone can read and understand Vedas. In fact most people are 'afraid' of such serious, intellectual texts as Vedas, *śāstras* and *purāṇas*. *Nāṭya* is addressed particularly to such people who along with enjoyment also gain serious ideas just as patients swallow medicine mixed in milk. But it is pointed out that *nāṭya* is for scholars as much as for *mandamati* non-intellectuals. For the knowledgeable, it reinforces the knowledge they acquire from *śāstras*, technical treatesis, and for the ordinary people it makes knowledge palatable.

This status of *nāṭya* assumes that knowledge enshrined therein is valid and categorical – why else would the auditor unquestioningly accept it? Evidently as this knowledge is communicated through enactment that is witnessed, seen, by the auditors, the experience enacted has the status of actuality (*sākṣāta*). Therefore the knowledge that is grasped from *nāṭya* has the status of perceptual knowledge, knowledge born of direct perception, *sākṣātakārātmaka jñāna*, and as such it has a definite validity. There is two kinds of knowledge – of the present (*aprokṣa*) and of the absent (*parokṣa*). The first is knowledge born of perception (*pratyakṣa*) and the other is born of other means such as words, inference, etc, and may be called *parokṣajñāna* or indirect knowledge. Indirect knowledge does not satisfy people – even when they gain indirect knowledge, they want to make it actual, and they want to 'see'. That is what drama does. It actualizes the knowledge of the non-present. And *pratyakṣajñāna*,

42 Being more concrete, being more visual than a dream, though equally fictive.
43 Brahma is the creator; so is the *naṭa* a creator.
44 We are told that Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka had expressed all these views in his book, *Sahṛdayadarpaṇa*, a work which is no longer extant.

knowledge born of direct perception, is most valid. *Nāṭya* therefore generates valid (*samyaka*) knowledge.

But what about *kāvya*, the narrative literature (as against the dramatic)? In such compositions *śabda*, language is the only means of knowledge and *śābdikajñāna*, knowledge produced by language, is *parokṣajñāna*, indirect knowledge; knowledge of what is not present. As such, what is its validity?

Abhinavagupta has said in his comments that the poet has the creative ability in language to make the objects virtually 'real' in the sense that the auditors almost 'see' and hear. After all, the process of denotation involves mental imaging on the part of the hearer / reader as Bhartṛhari had established elaborately in his *Vākyapadīya*. In a way all cognitive processes, not just verbal-comprehension, involve mental imaging. Even in direct perception the comprehension is of the mental image of the object. And in dream-consciousness, there is a mental image related in indefinable ways to some remembered/ recalled/ experienced object. Similarly the word also evokes a mental image. Thus all the three modes of cognition are alike:

1. Word 'horse' — evokes a mental image and is grasped as such
2. Actual 'horse' — is grasped as a mental image (in effect no two persons cognise an identical horse)
3. Dream 'horse' — is again grasped as a mental image.

So the reality of a cognition is in the mind of the cogniser. Or, to put it more exactly every object exists as it is present to our inner self – *ātma-pratyakṣa* as the Jaina thimkers say. So *pratyakṣa* is not what is present to our senses but what is present to our inner self. And as such all the three cognitions listed above have equal validity.

Therefore in substance there is no difference between *śābdikajñāna* and *pratyakṣajñāna*, and *śabdikajñāna* (verbal knowledge) is also *pratyakṣajñāna* (knowledge born of direct perception).

Hence literature (verbal art) is a discourse of valid knowledge, Abhinavagupta avers.

References

A. The following books have been used in this paper:

1. *Nāṭyaśastram*, editor, translator, Shri Babulal Shukla, Shastri, Vol. 1-4. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan 1984 (Sanskrit text with Hindi paraphrase)

2. Hindi *Abhinavabhāratī. Abhinavabhāratī ke Tīn Adhyāya* (1, 2, and 6). Chief Editor, Dr. Nagendra – Editor and commentator Acarya Viśveśvara Siddhāntaśiromaṇi, Delhi: Department of Hindi, University of Delhi 1960

B. The following have been referred to significantly in Abhinavagupta's explanatory commentary:

1. Vedas
2. Upaniṣadas
3. *Vāsavadattā*
4. *Śākuntalaṁ.*
5. Sāṁkhya
6. Yoga
7. Bhaṭṭa Tauta's *Sahṛdayadarpaṇa*
8. Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya*
9. Abhinavagupta *Bhagvadgītā vyākhyā*
10. *Abhidhānakoṣa*
11. *Mahābhārata*
12. *Bhagvad-Gītā*

C. Abhinavagupta has extensively examined the ideas of three *pūrvācāryas*, ankuka, Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa, Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka and established *saṁgati* among their ideas.

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Aesthetics



Abhinavagupta: His Aesthetic Universe

Dr. Radhavallabh Tripathi

Abhinavagupta is the greatest amongst the makers of Śaiva aesthetics. A staunch supporter of Śaiva monism, he acquired wisdom from many of the great gurus of his times directly and was deeply steeped in the traditions. He gave new interpretations to these traditions and created his own system. Abhinava's methodology involves studies in diverse systems through the original sources and incorporating them to his own system. By adopting this process, he could climb the pinnacles of thought. To quote his own verses that very aptly bring out his methodology –

उध्वोंर्ध्वमारुह्य यदर्थतत्त्वं
धीः पश्यति श्रान्तिमवेदयन्ती
फलं तदाद्यैः परिकल्पितानां
विवेकसोपानपरम्पराणाम् ।।

(Having tirelessly climbed higher and higher, the human intellect visualises reality; but this just happens to be the fruit of the the series of ladders of thought that were earlier conceived by men of yore.)

From this it would appear that Abhinavagupta has just utilised all the earlier theories, to formulate his own. But in the very next stanza he appears to deny this –

चित्रं निरालम्बनमेव मन्ये
प्रमेयसिद्धौ प्रथमावतारम् ।
सन्मार्गलाभे सति सेतुबन्ध
पुरप्रतिष्ठादि न विस्मयाय ।।

(Strangely, I presume that the first descent in the course of attainment of knowledge was without any support for me. But having found the correct path, there is no wonder in seeing that there are already bridges and foundations of the cities.)

Abhinavagupta perhaps was pointing out that the Theory of *Rasa*, as he was going to propound, came to him almost like a *spanda* – a vibration from within – and then he discovered that there were correspondences, there were bridges and links between his postulations and what others had been saying. Therefore he concludes –

तस्मात् सतामत्र न दूषितानि
मतानि तान्येव तु शाधितानि ।
पूर्वप्रतिष्ठापितयोजनासु
मूलप्रतिष्ठाफलमामनन्ति ।।

(Therefore, here the views of the wise have not been refuted but crystalised for refinement, because it is on the designs that have been well established earlier that the foundation rests firmly.)

Normally it is believed that Abhinavagupta has refuted the ealier theories. But the fact is that after expounding his own theory he was also seeing its interconnections with diverse traditions and various other theories.

The Background

To understand the bridges and interconnections that Abhinava envisaged, we will have to look into the background of all these theories.

The nucleus of the text of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* had already evolved before the Common Era and the fundamental concepts and key terms like *kāvya*, *rasa*, *chanda*, *kāma*, *krīḍā* or *līlā* (play), *rūpa*, *pratirūpa*, *śilpa*, *anukṛti* (making once again), *gīta* (song), *gāthā* and *alaṁkāra* had emerged even before the *Nāṭyaśāstra* came to be compiled. Bharata Muni evoked the conceptual universe of the Vedic seers to build up a comprehensive aesthetic theory. Bharata Muni has used the terms *krīḍā* (play) to define the form and function of *nāṭya* (theatre) in *Nāṭyaśāstra*. Theatre is also described as a *krīḍanīyaka* (a device for play).

It was in tune with the philosophy where the world is viewed as a *krīḍā* (play or sport) of the Divine Being. In *Śaivāgamas* the Divine Being is therefore described as *krīḍāpaṇḍita* (master of play).

True to his conceptual note or *pratijñāvākya*, Abhinava has accepted the basic tenets of *Rasa* as propounded by the earlier theorists, Lollaṭa, Śaṅkuka, and Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka, to link them to his own *abhivyaktivāda*. He has also referred to a number of other authors in the field

and has derived strength from them.

To Lollaṭa, the intensification of the abiding emotion or *sthāyī bhāva* becomes *rasa* after it is originated through its *vibhāvas* (causes) and manifests through the *anubhāvas* (ensuants). The actors are mistaken for the original characters through 'a willing suspension of disbelief'. The abiding emotions of the original characters are superimposed on these actors. This process of superimpositions is combined with another process, which Lollaṭa had termed *tādrūpyānusandhāna* – a searching thereafter for identification. This search for identity leads an actor to present a semblance of the *dramatis personae* and the audience to perceive the intensified emotion, which is finally consummated as *rasa*. The process requires the existence of the subject and the object as two separate entities. This process pre-supposes a conscious effort on the part of the connoisseur for realisation of *rasa*.

Śaṅkuka explained the process of *rasa* through the dual process of *anukṛti* (imitation) and *anumiti* (inference). He anticipates the whole concept of *sādhārṇikaraṇa* (decontexualisation, universalisation) when he says that the *anukṛti* done by the actor leads the spectator to cognise this actor as the character but this cognition is different from all worldly cognitions – *samyak* (real), *mithyā* (mistaken), *samśaya* (doubt) and *sādṛśya* (similarity). He also uses the analogy of a horse in a painting – *citraturaganyāya* – to describe the trans-mundane or extraordinary nature of this process, which enables the spectator to infer the emotion, and this inferred emotion becomes *rasa*. This is made possible through the skill and training of the actor in representation, as he also has to undergo the *anusandhāna vyāpara*.

A great turning point in the development of *Rasa* Theory came with Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka. Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka revolutionised the whole thinking, shifting the emphasis to the experience of the *sahṛdaya* (connoisseur). To explain the psychosomatic process of *rasa* realisation, he adopted terms from four philosophical systems – *Sāṁkhya*, *Mīmāmsā*, *Vedānta* and *Śaivism*. In earlier views of Lollaṭa and Śaṅkuka, the perceiver and the object of perception both are situated on different planes of time and space and are interrelated only due to *anusaṁdhāna* (search for identification) or *anumiti* (inference). In contrast to this, Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka found both the subject and the object uprooted from their time and space to stand on a single plane in the state of *bhoga* or bliss. Abhinavagupta, providing a subtle interpretation to his theory, calls this process of uprooting *ubhaya deśakāla tyāga*. Śāradātanaya in his *Bhāvaprakāśa* has exhaustively explained Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's theory and also shown how the whole process can be explained through the tenets of Śaivism. Accordingly, the three elements *rāga*, *vidyā* and *kalā* create an inclination in a person towards the pursuit of the arts. Because of *rāga*, the objects of poetry even when they are contaminated with sorrow and illusion produce *sukhābhimāna* or a sense of pleasure. He suggests that the process of *bhāvakatva* or *sādhārṇikaraṇa* (universalisation, de-contexualisation) tends to eradicate the intensive crisis of narrowness of human personality which lies in its remaining chained by the limited self. Once the mind is liberated from its limits, it attains the state of *bhoga* (bliss). The *sattvodreka* (exuberance of the tranquil state of mind) is characterised by *prakāśa* (light) and *vimarśa* (reflection). This *bhoga* involves a complex psychic process where the *bhoktā* (the connoisseur), the *bhojya* (the emotions to be relished) and *bhukti* (the process) are integrated.

Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka also postulated *śānta rasa* as a fundamental principle. Before him, Āryarakṣita (3rd Century AD), a Jain author, postulated the theory of *śānta rasa* in his *Anuyogasūtra* and even before Āryarakṣita, Aśvaghoṣa had categorically stated at the end of his *Saundarānanda Mahākāvya* that he has composed this poem for ultimate peace (*vyupaśānti*) and the poem had an inherent purpose of leading the listeners to emancipation (*mokṣārthagarbhā kṛtiḥ*). After him Udbhaṭa is perhaps the first *ācārya* in this tradition who accepts *śānta* as one of the *rasas*.

Abhinavagupta gave a sound but singular philosophical base to Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's views. He also revisited the theories of Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa and Śaṇkuka.

The contribution of Abhinavagupta to the theory of aesthetic experience lies in providing a broad base to Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's interpretation of the *rasa sūtra* given by Bharata Muni. He opines that Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka has taken the term in a limited sense, and failed to see how the process of *sādhāraṇīkaraṇa* (universalisation, de-contexualisation) would not only remove the bonds of limited conscience, it would also lead to unlimited bliss. It is an experience generated through *ubhaya deśakāla tyāga*, i.e. relinquishing his or her own time and space by the spectator and relinquishing the time and space of the drama as well.

For providing a comprehensive basis to his aesthetic theory, Abhinavagupta accepted the worldview or the concept of reality as propounded in the *Trika* system of Kashmir Śaivism. There are three ways to look at the Ultimate Reality: (i) the Ultimate Reality transcends this mundane world, (ii) it is embedded in this mundane world, and (iii) it is both transcendental as well as pervading this world. The *Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya* says:

विश्वोत्तीर्णमात्मतत्त्वमिति तान्त्रिकाः । विश्वमयमिति लाद्याम्नायविशिष्टाः ।
विश्वोत्तीर्णं विश्वमयं चेति त्रिकादिदर्शनविदः ।।

(प्र० 08)

The last option is upheld by the *Trika* system and is accepted by Abhinavagupta. He has extensively dealt with aesthetics in his commentary on *Īśvarapratyabhijñā Kārikā* and his monumental work *Tantrāloka*. For example:

स एव हि अहंभावात्मा विमर्शो देवस्य क्रीडादिमयस्य शुद्धे पारमार्थिक्यौ ज्ञानक्रिये । प्रकाशरूपा ज्ञानं मत्रैव स्वातन्त्रयात्मा विमर्शः क्रिया ।

(ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञाविमर्शिनी, 1.8.11.)

The terms *Prākāśa* (flash) and *vimarśa* (contemplation) are metaphorically used for the individual self as well as the Universal Self. The former, like a mirror is capable of reflecting the psychic images and residual traces. It is possibe to make a choice due to *vimarśa* and to make a search in the stock of memories. The cosmos is mirrored in the Universal Self; the world of art is mirrored in the artist. Just as the world is *ābhāsa* of the Universial Self Maheśvara, art is *ābhāsa* of the poet.

The aesthetic experience and the experience of the Self – both are treated at par. Sometimes in the philosophical texts of Śaivism the aesthetic process is cited as an example to illustrate the experience of Supreme Reality. The process of experience is the same – experience of the unlimited or infinite with the removal of *kañcukas* or shackles that limit the personality of a human being. The consciousness that consisits of everything, remains in a state of contraction on account of the difference in bodies. But when there is a *melaka* – a public celebration - it starts radiating and expanding because there is a fusion between these different forms. In the state of ebullition, it is reflected in the consciousness of all others. In an effortless way a glow issues forth as if many mirrors have been put together and are reflecting the one and the same light. That is why the bliss that one experiences whenever one is participating in a dance or music recital, does not belong to a particular individual, but to all.

The aesthetic experience and the experience of the Self – both are treated at par. Sometimes in the philosophical texts of Śaivism the aesthetic process is cited as an example to illustrate the experience of Supreme Reality.

The experiences acquired in this world can be categorised into three categories – the experience of worldly objects through sense organs, the aesthetic experience and the metaphysical experience. The *Vijñānabhairava* says that there is a divide between the subject and the object in all worldly experience; in aesthetic experience there is no division but the *saṃskārānuvedha* or the trace of a worldly experience or its subconscious remembrance lingers on. In the third category i.e. the metaphysical experience, however, there is no divide between the subject and the object. The greatest achievement of Abhinavagupta in the field of aesthetical philosophy is his endorsement of *śānta rasa*. As stated earlier, Udbhaṭa and Ānandavardhana both had accepted *śānta* as the ninth *rasa* in *śravyakāvya* and also there had been a long history of discussion on this *rasa* amongst the Buddhist and Jaina theorists. Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka was one of the major proponents of the *śānta rasa*. However, it was Abhinavagupta who built a philosophical foundation for this *rasa*. Following his guru, Bhaṭṭa Lollata, Abhinavagupta postulated the theory of *śānta* as *mahārasa*, with *tattvajñāna* as its *sthāyībhāva*. The theory has earlier prevailed in other traditions. Abhinavagupta gave a proper philosophical perspective to the earlier views on *śānta rasa*. Being an advaitist through and through, he perceived *śānta* as the ultimate in the process of *rasa* realisation. For this he vehemently refutes the objections of the opponents who are unable to accept *śānta rasa* within the gamut of dramtic activity. The main argument of the opponent is that if all activity ceases, dramatic performance will become impossible. The aesthetic experience manifests only in the presence of the objects of sense perception, than how can it materialize where such objects are denied? Abhinava refutes this argument on the basis of his concept of *puruśārtha* and establishes an invariable link between art experience and *paramapuruṣārtha* i.e., *mokṣa*.

Abhinavagupta's Concept of Poetic Beauty

As an idealist philosopher, Abhinavagupta establishes that beauty lies within. To him the real performance of a drama is an internalised event. The external material – the stage, props, costumes, even the actors and their histrionics – all belonging to our empirical world - are not the real theatre. The whole experience can be equated to the experience of Paramaśiva - the Supreme Reality that is indescribable.

Aesthetic Structure

Abhinavagupta holds *alaṁkāras* as necessary ingredients in literature – be it a poetic work or a *śāstric* text. *Alaṁkāras* serve twofold purpose in a text. Firstly,

they enhance the performance quality in the rendering of sentences of a dramatic poem, and secondly they make the text divine. The gods are pleased by the *alaṁkāras*. Commenting on the use of alliteration (*anuprāsa*) in the very first *kārikā* of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, Abhinavagupta remarks that the author of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* has used *chekānuprāsa* (a variety of alliteration) to show that the gods are pleased with beautiful designs and structures.

Alaṁkāras not only enhance the literariness of a text, they are also an integral part of its holistic structure, making it succinct with an extraordinary quality and fulfillment. The introduction of *alaṁkāras* tends to make an artistic creation extraordinary and this extraordinary nature of art is *alaṁkāra*. The *ācāryas* have termed it alambhāva or *alaṁkārabhāva*. Abhinava says, 'Remaining in the state of extraordinariness is the quality of being imbued with the *alaṁkāra* – the *alambhāva* or *alaṁkārabhāva*'.

Abhinavagupta on the Creative Process of Art

Abhinavagupta has objected to understanding the term *anukṛti* in the sense of imitation or mimesis. To him, it is a creative process leading to *rasa*-realisation. Some two thousand years before Abhinavagupta, Aitareya Mahīdāsa, the illustrious author of *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* and perhaps the first great aesthetic philosopher in the history of world art, has defined the creative process in art through the term *anukṛti*. Discussing two types of *śilpa*, i.e. *divya śilpa* and *mānuṣa śilpa*, *Aitareya Mahīdāsa* had said that the *anukṛti* of the former leads to the creation of the latter, i.e. *mānuṣa śilpa*. Abhinava accepted that art is *anukṛti* in a broad sense that art follows the world created by God, and there is an attempt to recreate the same in it. However, he rejected the idea of this *anukṛti* being taken in the sense of imitation.

The nine basic emotions lie naturally within the psyche of all humans, so that nobody asks a question like this – 'Why is a person full of love and enthusiasm'. These emotions remain dormant within, in the form of *saṁskāras* or traces, and they manifest through the process of *abhivyakti* (expression).

Obstacles in Aesthetic Experience

Abhinavagupta is perhaps the first aesthetician in the world history of art to have given a comprehensive and convincing treatment of the obstacles in the way of aesthetic experience or realisation of *rasa*, and the means for their removal. Since *rasa* is a harmonious unified state of mind, every flaw or extraneous element that obstructs the evolution of this harmony and unified consciousness is a stumbling block for the realisation of *rasa*. He has given a detailed explanation for the following obstacles in *rasa* realisation -

(1) *Sambhāvanāvirahaḥ* – inability to experience the generalised emotion due to lack of adequate realisation of probability or the reasonableness of things if the objects presented and actions depicted are not sufficiently convincing

(2) *Svagatatvaniyamena deśakālaviśeṣāveṣaḥ* – bias ensuing because of being chained to a particular time and space

(3) *Nijasukhādivivaśībhāva* – remaining obsessed with personal emotions

(4) *Pratītyupāyavaikalyaṁ* – inability to adopt means leading to emotive cognitions

(5) *Sphuṭatvābhāvaḥ* – lack of clarity

(6) *Apradhānatā* – absence of proper expression of emotions, and

(7) *Saṁśayayogaḥ* – remaining doubtful

Role of Traces (*saṁskāras*) in Aesthetic Experience

Abhinavagupta says that there are certain basic emotions – the *sthāyī bhāva* – that a human being carries with him right from the moment he is born. He prescribes the numerical limit of these stable emotions – they cannot be more than nine. The nine basic emotions lie naturally within the psyche of all humans, so that nobody asks a question like this – 'Why is a person full of love and enthusiasm'. These emotions remain dormant within, in the form of *saṁskāras* or traces, and they manifest through the process of *abhivyakti* (expression) whenever their causes, ensuants and subsidiary emotions are presented on stage or through recitation of a literary piece.

Abhinavagupta on the Relationship between Art and Value System

The concept of *puruṣārtha* forms a unique feature in Indian world-view. It is reflected in various cultural and social organisations. It has also played an indispensable role in shaping our aesthetic concepts, and it distinguishes the Indian concept of art from the western tradition.

The consideration for the *puruṣārthas* or four goals of human life has been inherent with the inception of *nāṭya*

(performing arts) in Bharata's theatre. The very identification of *nāṭya* with Veda as Abhinavagupta suggests establishes its *pumarthasādhakatva*, being the vehicle of *puruṣārtha*.

Bharata, and following him Abhinavagupta, visualise *nāṭya* as an activity leading to the realisation of four *puruṣārthas*. Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka, whom Abhinavagupta has quoted, would even regard the art experience as something more valuable than the experience of the yogins. The experience of yogins cannot equate to *rasa*.

वाग्धेनुर्दुग्ध एतं हि रसं यद् बालतृष्णया।
तेन नास्य समः स स्याद् दुह्यते योगिभिर्हि यः।।
(Quoted in *Dhvanyāloka Locana*, I.6)

Each *rasa* should culminate in one of the *puruṣārthas*. Even *śṛṅgāra rasa* may lead to *dharma* or *artha puruṣārthas*, and finally to *mokṣa* through these. Bharatamuni therefore includes *dharmakāma* and *arthakāma* as two of the varities of *kāma* or the feeling for *śṛngāra rasa*.

Abhinavagupta establishes all theatre activity in a state of complete identification – where nothing else remains except pure consciousness. "When a *rasika* goes to witness the performance of a play," says Abhinavagupta,"He will not even have a trace of the feeling that today I must do something useful, he rather has a feeling that today I am going to enjoy a unique spectacle". But with remarkable meticulousness and reasoning, he employs this very logic to establish finally that a dramatic performance as such leads to *puruṣārtha* and invests the psyche of the *rasika* with *saṁskāras*, so that when he finishes witnessing a dramatic performance, he has not seen simply a spectacle, he has undergone a transformation, to become a better human being. Abhinavagupta even terms the attainment of *puruṣārthādhiḥ* as *pratyakṣasiddha* - proven by direct experience. According to his interpretation, the *kavi* (poet) through his *anuvyāharaṇa* (recreating), the *naṭa* through his *anukaraṇa* (redoing) and the *sāmājika* or connoisseur through his *anudarśana* or *anuvyavasāya* (apperception) all three of them get an understanding of *puruṣārtha* in their own way. He insists that even the actor will have *paramapuruṣārtha lābha* or benefit of acquiring the goals of life as he undergoes the concentration and the state of *samādhi* through the performance –

नटस्यापि परमपुरुषार्थलाभो धारणादिवशात्–
- *Abhinavabhārtī*. Vol. I, p. 16

In this way, the *puruṣārthaprāpti* or attainment of all the *puruṣārthas* is just the end, because acquisition of *puruśārtha* is the inviolable condition for *rasa*-experience. There will be no *rasa* if the realisation of *puruṣārtha* is not there.

Bharata Muni has identified four *rasas* as basic or *mūla* *rasas*. They are *śṛṅgāra*, *vīra*, *bībhatsa* and *raudra*. Out of each of these, four other *rasas*, which are subsidiary, are generated. Thus *hāsya* is born out of *śṛṅgāra*, *adbhuta* comes of *vīra*; *bhayānaka* is produced by *bībhatsa* and *karuṅa* by *raudra*.[9] The logistics of this classification provide invariable linkage between *rasa* and *puruṣārtha*. Four basic *rasas* lead to the four *puruṣārthas*: *śṛṅgāra*, to *kāma*, *vīra* to *dharma*, *raudra* to *artha* and *bībhatsa* to *mokṣa*. *Bībhatsa rasa* is of two types - *kṣobhaja* (generated by anguish) and *udvegī* (born out of uneasiness or disgust). The former leads to disillusionment. This disillusionment clears the path to salvation. Through the aesthetics of *bībhatsa rasa*, therefore, the spectator or reader undergoes anguish, uneasiness and disgust, which will finally get him liberated from the mundane and the earthly. Abhinavagupta is right in suggesting that the experience of *bībhatsa rasa* would thus lead to *śānta* and to salvation.

Abhinavagupta thus explored the links of *bībhatsa rasa* with the experience of disillusionment, and detachment from the mundane world. In this way he also gave due recognition to the compositions of saints. His discourse on the theory of *śānta rasa* is a pronouncement on a different type of aesthetics. Rightly does he quote the following stanza from *Bhartṛhari* as an example of the poetry where *śānta rasa* reigns supreme –

वृथा दुग्धोऽनड्वान् स्तनभरनता गौरिति परं
कृता वैडूर्याशा विकचकिरणे काचशकले।
परिष्वक्तः षण्ढो युवतिरिति लावण्यरहितः
मया मूढेन त्वां कृपणमगुणज्ञं प्रणमता।।

(I have been uselessly milking a bullock thinking that it a cow with udders full of milk,

I raised hopes of an emerald from a shining piece of glass

I embraced a eunuch thinking that she is a beautiful damsel, fool that I was

I prostrated before a miser and a worthless person like you.)

Abhinavagupta also establishes the prominence of four *sthāyībhāvas* on the basis of their relation with *puruṣārthas*. All emotions do not lead to the *puruṣārtha*. Also all *sthāyībhāvas* or *sañcārī bhāvas* do not directly lead to *puruṣārtha*. Four of the *sthāyībhāvas* are directly linked to the four *puruśārthas*: *rati* to *kāma*, *krodha* to *artha*, *utsāha* to *dharma* and *nirveda* to *mokṣa*. In this way, the philosophical foundations provided by Abhinavagupta to his theory gave a convincing authenticity to Indian aesthetics.

[*Courtesy: Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan souvenir*]

1. *क्रीडनीयकमिच्छामो द्रश्यं श्रव्यं च यद् भवेत्।।*
क्वचित् धर्मः क्वचित् क्रीडा क्वचिच्छमः।।

2. *किन्तु दुर्घटकारित्वात् स्वाच्छन्द्यान्निर्मलादसौ।*
स्वात्मप्रच्छादनक्रीडापण्डितः परमेश्वरः।।
क्रीडा ते लोकरचना सखा ते चिन्मयः शिवः।
आहारस्ते सदानन्दो वासस्ते हृदयं सताम्।।

3. I am inclined to believe that he is quoting *Bhattanāyaka* verbatim in II Chap. Vadodara Edn., p.52-53) the original *kārikās* from his lost *Hṛdayadarpaṇa*. Some such *kārikās* are -

न तटस्थतया नात्मगतत्वेन प्रतीयते।
न चाभिधीयते क्वापि नोत्पद्येत कदाचन।।
तादात्विकेन प्रमदाद्यनुभावेन वासितः।
स्वादः सहृदयानां यो हलादात्मा हृदयङ्गमः।
स भावभिनयात् साधारणीकरणरूपया।
भावकत्वव्याप्रियया भाव्यमानः स्वभाववत्।।
भोगेन संविदानन्दमयैनैवोपभुज्यते।
भोक्तृभोग्यार्थसम्बन्धप्रकारश्चाभिधीयते।
भोक्तृभोग्यार्थसम्बन्धप्रकारश्चाभिधीयते।
रागविद्याकलासंज्ञैः पुंसस्तत्त्वैस्त्रिभिस्वतः।
प्रवृत्तिर्गोचरोत्पन्ना बुद्ध्यादिकरणैरसौ।।
भोगं निष्पाद्य निष्पाद्य वासनात्मैव तिष्ठति।
दुःखमोहादिकलुषमपि भोग्यं प्रतीयते।।

4. *एवं परोऽपि। तत एव न परिमितमेव साधारण्यम्। अपि तु विततम्। व्याप्तिग्रह इव धूमाग्योः। भयकम्पयोरेव वा तदत्र साक्षात्कारायमाणत्वे परिपोषिका नटादिसामग्री। यस्यां वस्तु सतां काव्यार्पिताना च देशकालप्रमात्रादीनां नियमहेतूनामन्योन्य – प्रतिबन्धबलादयत्यन्तमपसरणे स एव साधारणीभावः सुतरां पुष्यति। अत एव सर्व– सामाजिकानामेकधनतयैव प्रतिपत्ति सुतरां रसपरिपोषाय। सर्वेषामनादिवासना चित्रीकृतेचेतसां वासनासंवादात्। सा चाविघ्ना संवित्।......... ......नन्वेवं रसोऽप्रमेयः स्यादेवम्। युक्तं भवितुमर्हति। रस्यतैकप्रणो ह्यसौ न प्रमेयादिस्वभावः। तर्हि सुत्रे निष्त्तिरिति कथम्? नेयं रसस्य, अपि तु तद्विषयरसनायाः। ....अयमत्र संक्षेपः। मुकुटप्रतिर्शीर्षकादिना तावन्नटबुद्धराच्छाद्यते। गाढप्राक्तनसंवित्संस्काराच्च काव्यबलानीयमानापि न तत्र रामधीर्विश्राम्यति। अत एवोभयदेशकालत्यागः। रोमांचादयश्च भूयसा रतिप्रतीतिकारितया हृष्टास्तत्रावलोकिता देशकालानियमेन तत्र रतिं गमश्न्ति। यस्यां स्वात्माऽपि तद्वासनावत्त्वादनुप्रविष्टः। अत एव न तटस्थतया रत्यवगमः। न च तत्कारणतया। येनार्जनाभिषङ्गादिसम्भावना। न च नियतपरात्मैकगततया। येन दुःखद्वेषाद्युदयः। तेन साधारणीभूता सन्तानवृत्तेरेस्या एव वा संविदो गोचरभूता रतिः शृङ्गारः।*

5. *उच्यते परिपूर्णं चेद्भावीयं रूपमुच्यते।*
तद्विभुर्भैरवो देवो भगवानेव भण्यते।।
अथ तन्निजमाहात्म्यकल्पितोंऽशांशिकाक्रमः।
सह्यते किं कृतं तर्हि प्रोक्तकल्पनयाऽनया।।
अतएव यदा येन वपुषा भाति यद् यथा।
तत् तदा तत्तद्रूपमित्येवोपनिषत्परा।।
चैत्रेण वेद्यं जानामि द्वाभ्यां बहुभिरप्यथ।
मन्त्रेण तन्महेशेन शिवेनोद्रिक्तसक्तिना।।
अन्याहशेन वेत्येवं भावो भाति यथा तथा।
अर्थक्रियादिवैचित्र्यमभ्येत्यपरसंख्यया।।
तथाह्यकाग्रसकलसामाजिकजनः खलु।
नृत्तं गीतं सुधासारसागरत्वेन मन्यते।।
तत एवोच्यते मल्लनटप्रक्षोपदेशने।
सर्वप्रमातृतादात्म्यं पूर्णरूपानुभावकम्।।

Tantrāloka, 10.80-85, V part, p. 1948-50

संवित् सर्वात्मिका देहभेदाद् सा सङ्कुचेत् तु सा।
मेलकेऽन्योन्यसङ्घट्टप्रतिबिम्बाद् विकरस्वरा।।
उच्छलन्निजरश्म्यौघः संवित्सु प्रबिम्बितः।
बहुदर्पणवद् दीप्तः सर्वांशेनाप्ययत्नतः।।
अत एव नृत्तगीतप्रभृतौ बहु पर्षदि।
यः सर्वतन्मयीभावो हलादो नत्वेककस्य सः।।
आनन्दनिर्भरासंवित् प्रत्यक्षं सा तथैकताम्।
नृत्तादौ विषये प्राप्ता पूर्णानन्दत्वमश्नुते।।

Tantrāloka, V part

6. *मधुरादिरसास्वादे तद् विषयस्पर्शव्यवधानम्। ततोऽपि काव्यनाट्यादौ तद्व्यवधान शून्यता तद्व्यवधानसंस्कारानुवेधस्तु। तत्रापि तु तथादितव्यवधानांशतिरस्क्रिया– सावधानहृदया लभन्त एव परमानन्दम्। यथोक्तम् – यद्धिपानकृतोल्लासरसानन्द – व्यवस्थितेः* (*Vijñānabhairava*, 72)

7. *तत्र नाट्यं नाम लौकिकपदार्थव्यतिरिक्तं तदनुकारप्रतिबिम्बालेख्यमाहश्यारोपाध्यवसायोत्प्रेक्षा– स्वप्नमायेन्द्रजालदिविलक्षणं तद्ग्राहकस्य समयग्ज्ञानभ्रान्तिसंशयानवधारणानध्यवसाय–विज्ञान– भिन्नवृत्तान्तास्वादन रूपसंवेदनसवेद्यं वस्तु रसस्वभावमिति वक्ष्यामः। तस्य शास्त्रं बाह्यभाण्ड– नाट्यादिवैलक्षणयेन सम्यक्तत्स्वरूपावगमोपायं प्रकर्षणापरब्रह्मशिष्यो– दीरितानुपयोगिविकासावधानेन वक्ष्यामि।*

8. *पतामहमहेश्वराविति क्रमः छेकानुप्रासार्थः। सालङ्कारस्य च वाक्याभिनयतां दर्शयितुम्। सालङ्कारस्यदेवतापरितोषहेतुत्वं च दर्शयितुम्। पितामहेश्वरावित्यनेन देवयोर्लोकहितैषित्वमुक्तम्।*

9. *स्थायित्वं चैतावतामेव। जात एव हि जन्तुरियतीभिः संविद्भिः परीतो भवति। तथा हि––'दुःखसंश्लेषविद्वषी सुखास्वादनसादरः।' इति न्यासेन सर्वो रिरंसया व्याप्तः स्वात्मन्युत्कर्षमानितया परमुपहसन्नभीष्टवियोगसंतप्तस्तद्धेतुषु कोपपरवशोऽशक्तौ च ततो भीरूः किञ्चिदार्जिजीषुरप्यनुचितवस्तुविषयवैमुख्यात्मक– तयाक्रान्तः किञ्चिदनभीष्टतयाऽभिमन्यमानस्तत्तत्स्वकर्तव्यदर्शनसमुदितविस्मयः किंचिच्च जिहासुरेव जायते। न ह्येतच्चित्तवृत्तिवासनाशुन्यः प्राणी भवति। केवलं कस्यचित्काचित्काचिदधिका चित्तवृत्तिः काचिदूना। कस्यचिदुचितविषयनियन्त्रिता कस्यचिदन्यथा।*

(*Abhinavabhāratī*, chap VI)

10. *नाट्ये तु पारमार्थिकं किंचि मे कृत्यं भविष्यतीत्येवंभूताभिसन्धिसंस्काराभावात्सर्व परिषत्साधारण प्रमोदसारापर्यन्तविरसना (समा) दरणीयलोत्तरदर्शनश्रवणयोगी भविष्यामीत्यभि– सन्धिसंस्कारदुचितगीतातोद्यच र्वणाविस्मृतसांसारिकभावतया विमलमुकुरकल्पीभूमनिजहृदयः, सूच्याद्यभिनयावलोकनोदिभन्नप्रमोदशोकादि तन्तयीभावः पाठ्याकर्णनपात्रान्तरप्रवेशशात् समुत्पन्ने देशकालविशेषावेशाना लिङ्गिते सम्यङ्मिथ्यासंशय सम्भावनादिज्ञानविज्ञयेत्वपरामर्शानास्पदे, रामरावणादिविषयाध्यवसाये, तत्संस्कारानुवृत्तिकारणभूततत्सहचरहृद्यवस्तुरूप गीतातोद्य– प्रमदानुभवसंस्कारसूचितसमनुगततदुक्तरूपरामाध्यवसाय संस्कार एव भवन् पंचषैदिवसैः सचमत्कारतदीयचरितमध्यप्रविष्टस्वात्मरूपमतिः स्वात्मद्वारेण विश्वं तथा पश्यन् प्रत्येकं सामाजिको देशकालविशेषणापरामर्शेन एवंकारिणामिदमिति लीढा (लिङ्गा) त्मकविधिसमर्पितं सविज्जातीयमेव*

संविद्विशेषरंजकप्राणवल्लभाप्रतिमरसास्वादसहचररम्यगीतातोद्यादिसंस्काररसानुभव) वशेन हृदयाभ्यन्तरनिखातं तत एवोत्पुङ्खशतैरपि म्लानिमात्रमप्यभजमानं भजस्तत्तच्छुभाशुभप्रेप्साजिहासा– सततस्यूतवृत्तित्वादेव शुभमाचरत्यशुभं समुज्झति।

11. *तत्र पुरुषार्थनिष्ठाः काश्चित्संविद इति (ता एव) प्रधानम्। तद्यथा––रतिः कामः तदनुषङ्गिधर्मार्थनिष्ठा। क्रोधस्तत्प्रधानेष्वर्थनिष्ठः। कामधर्मपर्यवसितोऽप्युत्साहः समस्तधर्मादि– पर्यवसितः। तत्त्वज्ञानजनितनिर्वेदप्रायो विभावो मोक्षोपाय इति तावदेषां प्राधान्यम्। यद्यपि चैषामप्यन्योन्यं गुणभावोऽस्ति तथापि तत्तत्प्रधाने रूपके तत्तत्प्रधानं भवतीति रूपकभेदपर्यायेण सर्वेषां प्राधान्यमेषां वक्ष्यते। अदूरभागाभिनिविष्टहृशस्त्वेकस्मिन्नपि रूपके पृथक्प्राधान्यम्।*

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Theology



Trika Shaivism: An Introduction

Moti Lal Pandit

Abhinavagupta appeared at that point of historical time when Shaivism had taken deep roots as a distinctive religio-philosophical system in the soil of Kashmir. During Abhinavagupta's time (10-11th CE), Shaivism had become so embedded in the psyche of the Kashmiri populace that it had branched itself into various philosophical schools of thought, such as Spanda, Pratyabhijñā, Krama, and Kaula. Although a sufficient degree of integration among the above schools of Shaivism had been realised, yet there existed a number of lacunae of thought and practice among them. It was left to the genius of Abhinavagupta to fill these up, which task he successfully accomplished through his magnum opus the *Tantraloka* (TA), or 'The Light on the Tantras'. This mission of synthesisation derived its inspiration from the basic philosophical principles of Somananda and Utpala as well as from the study of the esoteric practices of the Krama and Kaula tantric systems. Insofar as the integration of various philosophical principles is concerned, Abhinavagupta accomplished this goal by writing, later on, commentaries on such a fundamental philosophical text as the *Īshvarapratyabhijñā* (IPV), or 'The Stanzas on the Recognition of God', of Utpala. Kashmir Shaivism, moreover, is not only a close ally of Tantrism, but is permeated by the presence of esoteric practices. Prior to Abhinavagupta, scholarship on these esoteric tantric practices was scattered and in a state of diffusion. There was no text comparable, for instance, to Patanjali's *Yogasūras* (cf. *Tantraloka* I.14), where one could locate them. To fill up this glaring gap, Abhinavagupta undertook the task of systematically interpreting the meaning and significance of these practices in relation to the Yoga of Kashmir Shaivism. In the *Tantraloka*, he treats systematically all those esoteric practices that would otherwise have been consigned to historical oblivion (TA I.19).

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Abhinavagupta was not only a prolific writer, but also a man of letters, of unfathomable wisdom and deep philosophical insights, an aesthetician, and, above all, a yogi par excellence. The spirit of learning and experience permeates whatever he wrote or commented upon. He began his writing career when he had gained mastery over the various schools of Indian thought, including those of Buddhism. He had studied about the dualistic school of Shaivism, that is, the school which traces its lineage to Amardaka, from Vamanatha, the son of Ekanatha (TA I.37-60). From Bhattenduraja Abhinava learnt the subtle aspects of the mono-dualistic philosophy of Shaivism, while Lakshmanagupta, the disciple of Utpaladeva, and the author of the *Īshvarapratyabhijnā*, imparted the necessary instruction to Abhinavagupta on the subject of the monistic philosophy of Shaivism. From Shambhunatha, the great master in tantric lore, he learnt the esoteric practices of Tantrism. The school of Tantrism that Shambhunatha represented owes its origin to Trayambakaditya, and it was Trayambakaditya's daughter who initiated the preceptorial line of this school of Tantrism. Of his

teachers, Shambhunatha, who initiated Abhinava into the esoteric lore of Tantrism, comes in for greatest praise (TA I.2I).

Abhinavagupta appropriately called his synthesis of all the schools of Kashmir Shaivism the Trika, or Triadic Shaivism, with Shiva, Shakti and Nara making up the triad. Traditionally, it is believed that the sources of Trika Shaivism are the sixty-four Bhairava Agamas. These Agamas, considered canonical, have been listed in the *Shrikanthi Samhita*, and have been quoted by Jayaratha in his commentary, *Viveka*, on the *Tantraloka* (TAV I. 39-44). Most of the Bhairava Agamas, on account of historical upheavals, are no more extant. What we possess at this time are the two Agamas, namely, the *Svacchanda* and the *Rudrayamala*. Apart from the Bhairava Agamas, there are other Agamic texts that are also thought of as sources of Trika Shaivism: these are the eighteen Rudra Agamas and ten Shaiva Agamas. Abhinava relies upon three main Agamic texts in writing the *Tantraloka*: namely, the *Vamaka Tantra*, the *Siddha Tantra*, and the *Malini Tantra*. The last two texts have been extensively quoted in the *Tantraloka*, thereby indicating their importance and significance.

Most of the esoteric practices of Tantrism discussed in the *Tantraloka*, particularly the practice of meditation through the six ways of space and time, seem to have been extracted mainly from the sixty-four Bhairava Agamas. This system of meditation is called *shadadhvan*. The other meditational practice, called *kalinaya* (the Method of Kali), too seems to have been extracted from the Bhairava Agamas. This complex meditational practice is part and parcel of the *shaktopaya*, or the Way of Energy, and can be understood only by those who have made much progress in the practice of the method. The esoteric aspect of this meditational technique is embodied by the twelve mysterious powers of Kali, Kali being the representation of ultimate Reality. The Trika Shaivism School conceives of Kali in a manner different from the Shakta School of Tantrism, which identifies the Feminine Principle with Ultimate Reality. The Trika thinkers see Kali as being the absolute power of Shiva who, as the transcendent principle, is thought to be the embodiment of Reality. It is through this power, that is, Kali's power, that Shiva as the philosophic Absolute performs the five cosmic activities of creational emanation, preservation, destruction, concealment, and disclosure, as the *Tantrasara* (TS 28-30) notes. The doctrines and practices of Kalinaya have their source in the *Kramasutra* of Siddhanatha (TAV 3.I 57-58), and Abhinavagupta has discussed them threadbare in his *Tantraloka*. Though the text of the *Kramasutra* is not available any more, quotations from it are to be found in Jayaratha's *Viveka*. As numerous such quotations from lost texts are to be found in the *Tantraloka*, it is a veritable storehouse of information. In the absence of the *Tantraloka* we would have been deprived even of such little knowledge of important esoteric practices and doctrines of the various schools of Kashmir Shaivism as we now possess. Abhinavagupta has, thus, rendered great service to humanity by preserving these now lost practices in his magnum opus, the *Tantraloka*.

The *Tantraloka*

The published text of the *Tantraloka*, which consists of twelve volumes, is encyclopedic in the range and depth of its discussion of the essential features of Trika Shaivism. The first chapter constitutes the first volume, and the second and third chapters the second volume of the *Tantraloka*. The first chapter deals with the basic characteristics of Trika Shaivism while the second chapter concerns itself with the significance of what is termed the *anupaya*, or the Null Method, thus designated because in it the Shaiva yogin is completely free from both internal and external exertions. On account of Shiva's grace, the yogi has spontaneous experience of liberation, in terms of which the fetters of bondage are not seen as fetters any more. This method is regarded as the highest on account of it's being totally the result of divine grace. The third chapter of the *Tantraloka* concentrates its attention on another important method that closely resembles the Null Method, namely, the *shambhava upaya*, or the Method of Shiva. Although little exertion in terms of meditation is involved in it, this method too is the result of divine grace (*anugraha*, *prasada*). This chapter also discusses the concept of *matrika*, or of Mothers, alongside the Method of Shiva. The *matrikas* as Mothers are the embodiment of Sanskrit letters, which symbolically represent the power of divine generation. As letters, the *matrikas* constitute mantras, and mantras are forces that unlock the mystery of existence.

While the first two volumes of the *Tantraloka* deal with the greater methods of salvation, the Null Method and the Method of Shiva, volumes three and four study the two lesser paths to salvation, namely, the *shaktopaya* or the Way of Energy, and the *anavopaya* or the Individual Way. The fourth chapter, which constitutes the third volume, not only explains the liberative Way of Energy, but also discusses the tantric concept of the twelve Kalis, or the twelve energetic modes of the Goddess, besides also the philosophic notion of reflection (*pratibimbavada*). The theory of reflection tells us how the absolute Shiva as

Pure Consciousness is present in that which is manifest. The presence of Shiva is reflected in the manifest realm in the same manner as one's reflection is reflected in a mirror. The fifth chapter, which explains and discusses the liberative method of the Individual Way, begins with a discussion of the unique features of Shaivite techniques of meditation *(dhyana)*. These differ radically from the ones enunciated in Patanjali's *Yogasutras* as Shaivite meditation is characterised by a pictorial visualisation of one's own inner potencies or forces. The meditator, while visualising pictorially these internal forces, correlates them to Shiva's cosmic activities of creational manifestation, preservation, withdrawal, concealment, and revelation. The meditator, through this process of visualisation, arrives at a point of heightened experience whereby complete identity between the individual consciousness and the Cosmic Consciousness is experienced. Also, in this method the meditator is asked to focus his concentration upon the *shaktichakra,* or the Wheel of Energy, which is also known as the *kalinaya,* or the Way of Kali. The concentration upon the Wheel of Energy is so focussed as to result in the emergence of a state in which the various so-called internal forces are integrated in the womb of Cosmic Energy. This method of meditation is also known as the Yoga of Intellect (*buddhiyoga).* The *anavopaya,* or the Individual Way, is meant for the beginner and is therefore considered to be inferior to the other methods mentioned above. Here, the meditator is asked to engage in such preliminary practices as are easy to practice. In order to stabilise his concentration, the meditator is advised to practice a specific type of *pranayama* or breath control that has been devised by the Trika Shaivism, which is a technique of breath control quite different from the one prescribed by the *Yoga Sutras.* The Trika system speaks of this technique as the *uttarayoga* or the Yoga of Emergence. The technique is devised so as to enable the meditator to concentrate on the five functions of breath (*prana)* - the *prana, apana, samana, udana,* and *vyana.* The meditator who gains proficiency in this technique is expected to have six types of blissful experiences: the *nijānanda, nirānanda, parānananda, brahmānanda, mahananda,* and *chidānanda,* while the highest possible blissful experience from the practice of this meditational technique is termed *jagadananda.*

Volumes four through seven of the *Tantraloka,* consisting of chapters six to twelve, deal thoroughly with the most important cosmological doctrine, that of the Six Ways *(shadadhvan)* of space and time. The meditational techniques used in relation to the six ways are jointly thought of as belonging to the external aspects of yoga *(bahya-yoga).* The meditator, while meditating upon the six ways of space and time, concentrates on such meditative objects as are external to consciousness. The sixth and seventh chapters also delineate, alongside the meditative techniques used in relation to time, the esoteric aspects of the mantra, besides also informing us about how to correlate mantras to the movement of breath in relation to time. This type of meditation is called *chakrodaya,* or the Emergence of the Wheel. The Trika cosmology is explained in the eighth chapter of the *Tantraloka.* The cosmological structure of Trika Shaivism is based upon the twenty-five Samkhya categories of existence *(tattva).* It, however, adds eleven more categories, thereby taking the total up to thirty-six. The highest category is Paramashiva and the lowest one is that of the phenomenal world. Trika believes in the existence of numerous realms besides our empirical world, and these realms are thought to be inhabited by beings invisible to the naked eye. The eighth chapter discusses, in the context of the Trika cosmology, such tantric deities as are thought to be ruling over these various realms. The ninth chapter concerns itself with such theological issues as, for example, the problem of creation, the appearance of three types of impurities *(malas),* and the nature of impure beings and of impure realms. The Trika mainly follows the Samkhya concept of causation, which believes in the presence of effect in the cause (*satkaryavada).* This chapter also throws light upon the nature of the beings that inhabit the various realms, discussing thereby their respective practices and powers. The notion of *kala* in relation to space is studied as well, and technical details are furnished as to how *kala* can be made use of when meditating upon space. The theological concept of grace (*shaktipata)* is discussed in chapters thirteen and fourteen of the *Tantraloka.* The Trika Shaivism of Kashmir has been called the religion of grace, as it is through divine grace that the seeker of salvation is enabled to reach his esoteric goal of liberation in terms of realising his unity with the supreme Consciousness, namely, Paramashiva. Grace is said to be of three kinds, namely, intense, medium, and slow. Each kind of grace gives rise to a result that befits it. Chapters fifteen through twenty-seven mainly discuss such tantric rituals as have a philosophical significance and meditative function, along with rituals that are used in various modes of tantric initiation (*dikshā).* The twenty-eighth chapter studies the tantric rites that a *tantrika* adept makes use of in his daily worship while the twenty-ninth takes into consideration the important esoteric practices of

Kaulism, which basically follows the left-handed tantric path *(vamachara)*.The last volume of *Tantraloka,* the twelfth, consisting of eight chapters, from thirty through thirty-seven, discusses various kinds of mantras and mandalas, though the most esoteric practices are never explicitly discussed, and are instead, clothed in a language of great ambiguity. The Trika system of thought is thoroughly analysed, with the conclusion that such a system of religious thought supercedes all others. The *Tantraloka* is abstruse, and cannot be understood without the help of a good commentary. Fortunately, we have the *Viveka,* a detailed commentary on the *Tantraloka* by Jayaratha (12th century), who also wrote another commentary on the tantric text *Vamakeshvarimata,* a text belonging to the Kaula tantric school. The *Viveka* is a commentary that is of immense help in understanding the arcana of both the theory and the practice the *Tantraloka* studies besides being a storehouse of quotations from several tantric texts that are no more available.

The Nature of Bondage

Fundamental to all schools of Indian thought is the belief that man's empirical existence is characterised by un-freedom, on account of which he experiences every kind of limitation and suffering, and that state of conditioned existence is termed bondage. The cause for this human bondage is said to be ignorance *(avidya)* and action *(karman)* (TL I.25). Primordial ignorance about the nature of Reality terminates in actions that bind an individual to the peg of transmigration. Trika Shaivism differs radically from other schools of thought, particularly from the school of Advaita, with regard to ignorance. The term that the Trika school makes use of for ignorance is *a-jnana,* which, when translated, means knowledge that is finite or limited. Ignorance, thus, does not mean, as it does for Advaita Vedanta School, total absence of knowledge *(na-jnana).* For the Trika School, ignorance denotes a form of knowledge that is characterised by finitude. It is the limited knowledge of limited beings. As a result of this finite or insufficient knowledge, an individual erroneously identifies himself with that which is also limited or finite. Consequently, he equates himself with his physical body or with the products of materiality like the intellect or empirical ego.

The limited knowledge that we as empirical beings have owes its existence to the erroneous perspective we entertain. It is thus not wrong to say that it is the sense of finitude of self-consciousness that constitutes empirical knowledge and is thought to be the substratum or underlying principle of what the Trika calls ignorance. Ignorance, or insufficient knowledge is thus seen as the main cause of human bondage. As a bonded being, an individual always identifies his self-consciousness with finitude. Ignorance, according to the Trika, is of two kinds: innate *(paurusha)* and intellectual *(bauddha)* (TLV I.36). Innate ignorance is characterised by an orientation in terms of which an individual experiences himself as limited and finite. This sense of limitation debars him from experiencing himself as infinite and unlimited. Finding himself limited, and thereby unfree, the individual subjects himself to the flow of space-time temporality (TL I.37-38). It is this subjection to the flow of temporality that really constitutes human un-freedom or bondage. For the Trika thinkers, it is this sense of limited individuality, caused by innate ignorance that obstructs the awareness of infinitude. This sense limitation results in the law of restriction *(niyati),* which is the basic feature of temporal existence, for, as empirical beings, it is the law of restriction that governs us. Intellectual ignorance — the second type of ignorance — expresses itself in terms of conceptual limitations. Solely depending on his intellect, an embodied existent thinks of himself as well as of his capacities in terms of space and time-bound concepts. The limited conceptual knowledge that an individual has of himself leads him to think that his essential nature is as limited and finite as that of any object in nature. As a self-reflecting being, an individual identifies his consciousness with his empirical ego. This limited self-awareness is a limitation of his finite conceptual knowledge. This kind of ignorance, in short, is characterised by mental confusion regarding one's own true nature. This dyadic classification of ignorance does not mean that they are independent of each other (TL I.40). Intellectual ignorance, for example, cannot find its proper expression unless supported by innate ignorance. This mutual support determines their dependence upon each other: it is their mutuality that is really responsible for the individual's subjection to such worldly experiences as are fundamentally painful. The

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totality of such experiences is termed *samsarika*. It is legitimate and proper for an individual to seek a mode of existence that is completely free from *samsarika* pain. The Trika system recognises that the esoteric goal of freedom from pain is possible only upon the elimination of the above two types of ignorance. There is the possibility that the preceptor may, through his miraculous power, cause the destruction of innate ignorance in the disciple; yet, the *Tantraloka* says that mental confusion may still prevail on account of the continuance of intellectual ignorance (TA I.45). Thus, ignorance will persist till such time as the seeker continues to entertain an erroneous intellectual understanding of Reality. The possibility of overcoming ignorance *per se* is available to the seeker, according to the Trika, provided he gets himself initiated in the esoteric path of Trika Shaivism. The destruction of ignorance, however, is dependent upon the extent to which the seeker successfully advances on his spiritual path. It is the inner spiritual development that enables the seeker to gain such spiritual powers whereby ignorance may disappear of itself. As the function of ignorance is to conceal, so the function of knowledge *(jnana)*, as the opposite of ignorance, is to reveal that which is hidden or concealed. It is on account of this revelatory function of knowledge that it is equated with the luminosity of light. It is consciousness alone that has the power of revealing the object of knowledge, and accordingly, consciousness is said to be characterised by luminosity *(prakasha)*. Knowledge too, like ignorance, is classified into two types, namely, knowledge that is innate *(paurusha)* and knowledge that is intellectual *(bauddha)*. Knowledge that ends in the elimination of all forms of ignorance is said to be intuitive *(pratibha)*. Mere intellectual knowledge has not the capacity to give rise to transcendent knowledge that is ultimate and final. This is so because intellectual knowledge is dependent upon the subject-object duality, and knowledge that is contingent has no possibility of eliminating ignorance in toto (TL I47). As far as innate knowledge is concerned, it is of an intuitive nature, on account of which character, it arises by itself (TL I.4 I). Free from conceptual duality, innate knowledge thereby has the power of removing everything that obscures Reality. The emergence of this knowledge is actualised the moment the limiting individuality of the individual melts away. Upon the disappearance of individuality, and upon the appearance of intuitive knowledge, the seeker has the experience of Reality as pure and infinite I-Consciousness *(samvid)*. This transcendent experience of Reality as being pure I-Consciousness results in what in theological terms is called liberation while alive *(jivanamukti)* and liberation after death *(videhamukti)* (TAI.I7). Since Trika Shaivism adheres to the monistic philosophic viewpoint, it is but natural for it to say that an individual being is ontologically non-different from ultimate Reality, which is interpreted as being of the nature of pure Consciousness. Upon analysing the nature of ignorance as well as that of knowledge, it is but natural for the Trika thinkers to speak of the former as being the cause of bondage and of the latter as the reason for liberation. The erroneous apprehension of the Self as limited is equated with ignorance, and as the nature of ignorance is to conceal, it gives rise to a form of knowledge of Reality that is erroneous, and which Trika Shaivism sees as the cause of bondage. Ignorance, thus, does not denote the absence of knowledge. Rather it signifies incomplete or insufficient knowledge about Reality. Were ignorance to mean complete absence of knowledge, then there would be no possibility for knowledge to emerge. Since such a situation has never been experienced, it means that each individual being has some knowledge of what Reality is. The question that confronts us at this point is, why is it that some individuals develop a keen interest in the ways and means that are supposed to culminate in the realisation of perfect knowledge concerning ultimate Reality, whereas in others we discern the absence of such an interest? Trika's stock-in-trade answer to this question is to resort to the theological principle of grace rather than to rational explanation. They who seek the esoteric knowledge of liberation are led on this path by the grace *(anugraha)* of Shiva (TA I 3. IO5). The seeker's search for liberative knowledge is thus the result of divine grace, which is free and gratuitous. An individual has no ability to intensify his desire for divine knowledge. It is grace alone that saves an individual from the perdition of *samsarik* bondage (TL I3.I I6). It

Solely depending on his intellect, an embodied existent thinks of himself as well as of his capacities in terms of space and time-bound concepts. The limited conceptual knowledge that an individual has of himself leads him to think that his essential nature is as limited and finite as that of any object in nature.

can be pointed out that this divine determinism in terms of grace robs man of his free will and autonomy, even though it may be a limited one. Just as liberation is seen as the result of divine grace, so bondage too is viewed as the result of divine concealment. Both of these processes of revelation (that is, grace) and concealment (that is, ignorance) are treated as the divine play of the Lord. The Lord, while concealing his divine nature, manifests himself as a bound individual. The individual being breaks down his barriers the moment he recognises *(pratyabhijna)* his essential nature to be non-different from that of Shiva. This amounts to saying that the individual being is essentially and ontologically divine.

The nature and content of ignorance have been explained and interpreted in different ways by different schools of Indian thought, there being two points of view in this regard. One school of thinkers sees ignorance as causeless and beginning-less whereas the other believes that ignorance has a cause as well as a beginning. The latter are theologically theistic in orientation, and so locate the cause of ignorance in the divine play of the Lord. In ascribing the origin of ignorance to this divine play of the Lord, these thinkers thereby can equally say that removal of ignorance too is the play of the Lord. It is a kind of hide-and-seek game that God seems to be playing with the inhabitants of the world. The former school, while not ascribing any cause to ignorance, calls it inexpressible. Although here ignorance is believed to be without a beginning, it can be negated through the revelation of knowledge. Nyaya-Vaisheshika, one of the oldest philosophical schools, is of the view that ignorance is characterised by sixteen wrong elements of logical reasoning. In contrast to the Nyaya-Vaisheshika position, we have Samkhya-Yoga School that adheres to the notion that ignorance comes on account of mutual confusion *(aviveka)* between individual consciousness *(purusha)* and lifeless matter *(prakriti)* *(Samkhya-karika* 20*)*. The Advaita Vedanta of Shankara thinks that it is the transcendental illusion *(maya)* that really causes ignorance to be. However, this transcendental illusion is not a real entity. It is as illusory as illusion itself. Were *maya* to be real, then it could never be negated, which would mean that ignorance is eternal. If ignorance is eternal, then liberation is not possible. Since ignorance is negated upon the emergence of knowledge, it means that *maya*, too, is unreal. The orthodox Buddhists have equated ignorance with wrong views, which here mean adherence to extreme philosophical or religious viewpoints. In contrast to these extreme philosophical or religious views, the Buddha propounded and espoused the Middle Way. The Middle Way doctrine is contained in the Four Noble Truths. The Mahayana Buddhists, however, broadened their interpretation with regard to ignorance. The Madhyamika School of Nagarjuna says that ignorance neither exists nor does not exist. If we negate or affirm one view, we thereby affirm or negate the other view. The purpose of the Middle Way is to have no view at all. This negative approach did not satisfy the Yogachara School, which sees consciousness as momentary. In its momentary flow, consciousness manifests itself as ego in different individuals. This appearance of consciousness as ego is determined by the past impressions that remain stored in what is called the storehouse-consciousness *(alaya-vijnana)*. Insofar as these subconscious impressions remain unexhausted, consciousness as a momentary flow will transmigrate from one existence to another. These subconscious impressions are said to be the basic constituents of ignorance. Trika Shaivism's understanding of ignorance is derived from its absolutistic theism. Though Reality is affirmed as non-dual, it is not, however, equated with philosophic impersonalism. The Absolute is not only Pure Consciousness, but also a Reflecting Consciousness, which means that the nature of Consciousness is not only luminous, but also dynamic. This philosophic conception of Reality is, at the popular level of thought, projected in terms of the dyadic couple, Shiva and Shakti. In theological terms this philosophic Absolute as Consciousness and Reflection is termed God or Lord. For a Trika Shaivite, the cause of ignorance is nothing but the divine play of the Lord. The manifest universe is nothing but the self-manifestation of the Lord (TA 33.64-65). This entire process of self-manifestation of the Lord as the manifest universe constitutes the drama of divine play. Moreover, it is one of his cosmic activities, and the other cosmic activities of the Lord are preservation, withdrawal, concealment, and revelation (TA 3.64). The process of manifestation simultaneously also involves concealment. While manifesting himself as the universe, the Lord thereby also conceals himself by appearing as an atomised and bound being. This process of concealment of the Lord is equated with epistemic ignorance. As a bound being, the individual experiences himself as a distinct entity, and it is as a distinct entity that the individual may be considered as the creation of God.

The Nature of Liberation

Liberation and bondage are two opposed as well as contrasting entities. It is upon the negation of bondage that liberation is experienced. That which has the

possibility of being transcended cannot at all be thought of as being real, because the real, being indivisible, can never be negated. This, then, means that liberation and bondage, from the ultimate standpoint, are not at all opposites. Were both to be treated as real, then we can never experience liberation. Since neither is actually real, it means that the so-called atomised individual exists always in the state of liberation. The problem lies in not recognising the fact that bondage is not real. Were not the case such, then liberation would be an impossible goal to realise. Our experience, however, informs us that we do experience freedom occasionally, even at the empirical level. It would mean that bondage as a limitation is not absolute, and, therefore, real. Bondage or ignorance will be seen to be real to the extent one remains subject to an empirical mode of understanding. Insofar as linguistic tools of analysis are made use of, we shall always attempt to contrast and compare it with liberation. Once empirical thought processes are transcended, ignorance by itself ceases to exist, and thus, upon its negation, it no more exists as an entity opposed or in contrast to freedom.Trika Shaivism holds that the existence of bondage will continue to the extent that our understanding of Reality is based upon misconceptions. The problem, therefore, is epistemological. The moment this epistemological confusion concerning the nature of Reality is resolved, liberation from bondage is realised at that very instant (TA I.156). Gaining access to accurate knowledge about Reality is dependent upon the extent to which we have succeeded in the practice of Shaiva yoga. It is asserted that the practice of Shaiva yoga leads to the attainment of that epistemological state that is known as the state of *pratyabhijna,* or recognition. It is a state of knowledge in which the essential nature *(svarupa)* of the Self *(atman)* is recognised as being non-different from the Absolute *(paramashiva)*. Through this epistemic recognition is also recognised the fact that the external world is nothing but the self-manifestation or emanation *(abhasa, visarga)* of the Absolute (*Paramarthasara* 48). Moreover, this epistemic recognition results in the realisation that one's consciousness, which is essentially of the same nature as the Absolute, is not only limitless and infinite, but also omnipotent. An adept who has attained this state of recognition is termed as the one who is liberated-while-alive *(jivanamukta)* (IPV 2.3.17). A *jivanamukta,* while living in the world, is not, however, free from the impact of past deeds *(sanchita-karman, prarabdha-karman)*. He will have to reap the consequences of his deeds from previous existences till they are exhausted. To remain under the impact of *karman* would mean that he is not yet completely free from the limitations of bondage. Once the *karman*-impact is exhausted, a *jivanamukta* realises perfect identity with the Absolute, which means that he is now entitled to enjoy all the divine bounties. The state of perfect identity with the Absolute is consequent upon the abandonment of embodied existence, that is, after death. This absolute form of liberation is called the *videhamukti,* or liberation-upon-death. In contrast to the *videhamukta,* however, the possibility of experiencing divine omnipotence and omniscience is not available to the *jivanamukta,* on account of his being an embodied existent.

There is, however, a higher state of liberation that a *jivanamukta,* has the possibility of gaining as an embodied existent, and this state is called *samavesha,* or submergence. This is a liberative state that arises unexpectedly, and in it, the aspirant experiences perfect identity with the Absolute. It is a state of experience in which the aspirant's consciousness is, as it were, seized by the Absolute. While being conscious of his individuality, the aspirant simultaneously feels as if his individual consciousness is being transmuted into the Absolute (TA I.173-174). This experience of the submergence of individual consciousness into the Absolute results in the recognition that the so-called individual consciousness is not different from divine consciousness. The experience of submergence also terminates in the realisation of supernatural powers *(siddhis)*. Two courses are open to a *jivanamukta* of this kind at the end of his earthly journey: he either chooses total absorption in the Absolute, or he may incarnate himself as a supernatural being for the purpose of extending help to those who seek liberation. This latter course of action seems to be based upon the Bodhisattva model. It is a model that teaches the abandonment of desire for personal salvation for the sake of others. Apart from *jivanamukti* and *videhamukti,* there is another type of liberation called the *kramamukti* or the graduated liberation. It is another form of liberation that is completely dependent upon the grace of the Lord. The grace, however, is such that it does not culminate in complete liberation from bondage. While practicing Shaiva yoga, the aspirant does not develop such spiritual capacity as will enable him to loosen, in one go, the grip of impurities. Upon death, the aspirant on such a path has the possibility of entering into a divine abode that corresponds to the spiritual stage he had attained prior to his death. Upon entering the divine abode, he, with the aid of the presiding deity of the abode, may be able to eliminate all the impurities that bar him from gaining access to liberation. The aspirant, thus, in a graduated manner, moves to

different higher divine abodes, and ultimately reaches a state whereby he merges in the Absolute (TA I3.244-45). This model, too, has an equivalent in Pure Land Buddhism, which believes that salvation comes through faith rather than self-effort. Realising the limitations of a human being, the Pure Land Buddhists arrived at the conclusion that the grace of Amitabha Buddha alone has the power of freeing man from his bonded condition. They who have faith in the saving grace of Amitabha enter, upon their death, the Western Paradise. As Amitabha is the presiding Buddha of this heavenly realm, so he enables his believers to arrive at the ultimate state of salvation, i.e., *nirvana*. This is exactly what the Trika seems to be propounding in the context of its theory of *kramamukti*.

The Nature of Reality

Most of the Vedic schools of thought adhere to a philosophical viewpoint that may be termed realistic pluralism. As realists, they believe in the reality of more than one entity. The oldest realistic school is that of Nyaya-Vaisheshika. This school of thought believes in the existence of several elements like atom, soul, mind, time, space, God, and so on. The other realistic school is that of Mimamsa, or the school of exegesis. A firm believer in strict realism, this school agrees with Nyaya on many points. The other realistic school, the Samkhya-Yoga, believes in the eternal existence of matter *(prakriti)* and soul *(purusha)*. Matter in itself is insentient. This insentient matter begins to evolve itself into the manifest categories of existence the moment there is disturbance among its three innate constituents, which are termed peaceful *(sattva)*, passionate *(rajas)*, and inert *(tamas)*. Due to the disturbance in the equilibrium of the constituents, one of the constituents dominates the other two. It is this disturbance that really provides the initial movement or thrust to primordial materiality to evolve itself into the manifest categories of existence. While undergoing the process of evolution, the soul, which is non-objective and Pure Consciousness, somehow comes in contact with insentient materiality. As a consequence of this contact, the soul thereby gets imprisoned in what is called embodied existence. While in the prison-house of matter, the soul's purity is not affected at all. It remains as pure as it was prior to its encagement. The relationship between the soul and matter is of the same nature as that between an object and its reflection in a mirror. The involvement of soul with matter therefore is not real but apparent. The theory of the three constituents has also been interpreted in terms of the qualities *(gunas)* of an entity. An entity is by nature either good, energetic, or harmful. Thus, if viewed from a psychological point of view, man's character is either good, active, or evil. In its application to ethics, the theory tells us that actions are either good, passionate, or evil. This theory therefore has influenced every aspect of Indian philosophical thinking, no school of Indian thought has escaped from the far-reaching influence of the Samkhya philosophy. The Vaishnavism and Shaivism of the South also follow the realistic pluralism conceptualised by the Samkhya system.

Buddhism as a heterodox school of thought does not at all encourage any kind of search for a metaphysical reality. The early Buddhists were not only realists, but were analytical realists. As realists they believed in the existence of elements. As empiricists, they rejected the existence of entities that could not be verified empirically. For them the phenomenal entities exist, but only momentarily. Human existence itself is simply a psycho-physical complex. No permanent entity like the self exists within man. Man is simply a bundle of ever-changing aggregates. The chain of causation can explain how the world has come into existence. Thus, the principle of first cause is eliminated once and for all. Insofar as human subjectivity is concerned, it consists of factors that are as momentary as are the objective ones. Since this naive realism could not satisfy the inner yearnings of man, it was accordingly abandoned in favour of critical philosophy upon the emergence of the Madhyamika school of thought. This school of thought was so radical that it neither affirmed nor denied the existence or non-existence of anything. Since nothing can affirmatively or negatively be said about Reality, it is better to remain silent. This silence concerning Reality was identified with the Buddha's Middle Way doctrine, which maintained the avoidance of extreme standpoints, whether ethical or philosophical. Further, the Madhyamikas interpreted the avoidance of extremes as denoting the Buddha's theory of dependent origination *(pratityasamutpada)*. The thrust of this doctrine is that phenomenal entities do not arise by themselves or through others, but through the principle of interdependence. This doctrine of interdependence is graphically depicted in what is called the chain of causation. As phenomena arise interdependently, it means that they are destitute of an intrinsic nature *(svabhava)*. That which is devoid of innate nature is, according to the Madhyamika thinkers, identical with Emptiness *(shunyata)*. Insofar as the Absolute is concerned, we can say nothing about it, as it transcends every mode of thought. It is Emptiness alone that indicates as to what the Absolute is. As both the Absolute and the world are identical with Emptiness, they are, thereby, non-different from each other, which means that *nirvana* and *samsara* are one and the same. This radical negativism, however, could not last for long, and accordingly, a new

school of thought came into existence, namely, the Yogachara School. The Yogachara School, being idealistic in orientation, endeavoured to harmonise the naive realism of early Buddhism with the critical philosophy of Madhyamika. Instead of laying its eggs in the basket of Emptiness, the Yogachara postulated the existence of the Mind-Only. Insofar as the world outside is concerned, it exists to the extent that it is perceived by the mind. The objective world is to be treated as a mere representation. Mind or consciousness, however, is as momentary as any other aggregate. Even this idealism of the Yogachara could not satisfy the religious yearning of an average Buddhist. Ultimately a kind of theism as well as philosophical monism was allowed to emerge. The theistic orientation gave hope to the ordinary believer that he has the possibility of gaining access to *nirvana,* whereas monism ushered in a philosophical outlook that saw each sentient being as potentially a Buddha. The doctrine of momentariness is so universalised as to lead to the conclusion that no permanence can be established in any empirical category. The momentary existence of empirical categories also means that there is no permanent substratum that may be seen as the basis of change. Instead each empirical entity is generated in a moment and, while generating as its replica another entity, passes away in a moment. This process of momentary generation and destruction goes on endlessly. Nothing endures beyond a third moment. It is this perspective that the Yogacharins apply to consciousness. For them consciousness is as momentary as any other empirical entity. The momentary existence of consciousness expresses itself in terms of mental states and physical entities. For the Hinayana Buddhists, the momentary flow is of two kinds: (a) mind and mental states, and (b) matter and material entities. Accordingly, the conclusion is that no metaphysical entity is to be found beyond the momentary flow of mind and matter. It is this view of flux or change that has prevented most of the Buddhists from embarking upon an ontological journey.

As the Absolute is transcendent to the space-time continuum, so the intellect, which operates within the framework of space-time, has no power to conceive what the Absolute is in itself. It is this non-conceivable Absolute that is said to be the source as well as substratum of all that is manifest.

The sectarian Hindu religious schools uphold their respective views concerning the nature of Reality. The Vaishnavite School of Vallabha claims to be monistic in orientation, yet, on investigation, the claim does not pass the logical test. Vallabha's philosophical views are closer to the views of another Vaishnavite thinker, namely, Ramanuja. As far as the Veershaiva School is concerned, it is difficult to determine what they mean by *samarasya*. The concept of *samarasya* is so ambiguous that we are unable to assess the relation of the liberated soul to Shiva. The Advaita Vedanta of Shankara, although monistic in its orientation, is not sufficiently theistic (see M*andukya-karika* I.16-17).

The Trika Shaivism of Kashmir, even as it upholds monistic theism, thinks that the Absolute is the ontological substratum of all that is manifest. As Absolute, it is beyond the reach of empirical or rational categories of thought. The Absolute as transcendent can neither be explained nor expressed in terms of intellectual concepts. Whatever rational knowledge we may gather about the Absolute, it is always in terms of approximations. The Absolute is unnamable, and so we cannot speak of it as being Shiva or Shakti (TL 2.24). Whatever linguistic or conceptual formulation we may advance concerning the Absolute, it is never absolutely real or authentic (IPV I. I.2). This is so because the intellectual formulations about the Absolute are always determined by the restrictions that space-time imposes upon the intellect's capacity to know. As the Absolute is transcendent to the space-time continuum, so the intellect, which operates within the framework of space-time, has no power to conceive what the Absolute is in itself. It is this non-conceivable Absolute that is said to be the source as well as substratum of all that is manifest. Although indefinable in itself, the Absolute however has been defined as that which is eternal and infinite I-Consciousness. As the source of everything, the Absolute is everything. Being identical with every manifest category, the Absolute thereby also shines in everything as everything. Although identical with every phenomenal category, it transcends them all.

Further it is asserted that the essential nature of the Absolute is its Godhead, that is, the Absolute is God by its very nature. By identifying the Absolute with Godhead, the Trika thereby favours theism. For this reason the Trika philosophy has been categorised as theistic monism.

Insofar as ontological explanation of the Absolute is concerned, Trika Shaivism has adopted the following philosophical approach. Every entity, whether phenomenal or numinous, owes its existence to Shiva, who is identical with the Absolute as God (TA I.52). Shiva as absolute God is pure Light *(prakasha),* that is, spiritual light of consciousness. This Light of Shiva is self-evident everywhere and in everything due its very nature (TA I.54). It is on account of this light of consciousness that we are able to know what is to be known. If consciousness was destitute of this light, then there would be utter darkness and the emergence of knowledge would be impossible. Since it is in and through consciousness that knowledge is actualised, it means that the nature of consciousness as light is self-evident. Therefore, consciousness as light cannot be known by employing empirical means of knowledge. The equivalence of consciousness with the luminous light is established by the fact that every conscious being is conscious of himself. This self-consciousness arises on account of consciousness being identical with light, that is, with revelation. As the nature of light is luminosity, so the nature of the light of consciousness is to illumine everything by its light. Light reveals that which has existence or that which exists. In the context of phenomenal entities it means that they depend for their existence upon the light of consciousness (TA I.59-60). To shine as well as to illumine everything that exists is the very nature of the light of consciousness (TA 2.I6). Since everything shines in and through the light of consciousness, it is but the light of consciousness that shines in all manifest categories of existence (TA 2.30). This philosophical monism of Trika Shaivism is known as the *pratyakshadvaita,* or the monism that can be perceived through the senses *(Malinivijayavartika I.*763). Light, as one of the inherent aspects of the Absolute, is infinite, sovereign, eternal, and thereby beyond the space-time continuum (TA I.59-60).

The Absolute as consciousness is not only light *(prakasha),* but also reflection *(vimarsha).* The reflective aspect of the Absolute discloses its dynamic nature. It is through the power of reflection that the Absolute manifests itself in phenomena in different shapes and forms. It is in and through reflection that the Absolute appears as phenomena. The universe as well as whatever there is in the universe is the self-manifestation of the Absolute. They who have gained perfection in Shaiva-yoga perceive as well as experience that everything in the universe is nothing but the self-extension of Shiva himself as the *Shivadrishti* (5.I05-9) notes. They see the presence of Shiva not only in the manifest categories, but also beyond them. Trika Shaivism does not attempt, as does the Advaita Vedanta, to apply the principle of indicative power of speech *(lakshana)* to such scriptural statements as, for example, *tat tvamasi* (that thou art). The Trika Shaivas uphold that Shiva as the Absolute shines both in the world as well as beyond it. The Absolute thus is both transcendent and immanent. The Absolute, when conceived as God, is endowed with the absolute powers of will, action and knowledge.

Taking cue from the *Upanishads,* Trika Shaivism has attempted to explain the manifestation of Shiva as consciousness in psychological terms. The Absolute manifests itself not only as an objective universe, but also in and through the three states of consciousness: of waking, of dreaming, and of deep sleep (TA I.80). It is in and through its luminosity that the Absolute both pervades and transcends the objective world of phenomena. It is in the revelatory aspect of the Absolute that the cause of the universe has been located. It is maintained that the light of consciousness continuously shines forth as well as maintains the playful drama of the universe (TA I.92). The entire universe is nothing but the manifestation of the light of consciousness by virtue of its playfulness. To be playful is the basic nature of Shiva (TA I.66). *Prakasha,* in the process of its manifestation, does not suffer from any modification because the Absolute manifests itself in the same manner as the moon is reflected in a clean pool of water (TA 3.4).

The indivisibility of the Absolute shines forth eternally due to its being of the nature of light. The luminosity of the Absolute represents its static aspect. As the essence of light is reflection, so the Absolute shines forth as God through the five cosmic powers of manifestation, preservation, withdrawal, obscuration and revelation. It is through the reflective aspect that the Absolute expresses its five cosmic powers. At the conceptual level of thought, this aspect is known as *shakti,* which in terms of religious devotion is symbolised by the Goddess. The Goddess, as the principle of femininity, represents the creative aspect of the Absolute Shiva, while representing the principle of maleness, is in Himself passive and inactive, and this is conceptually represented by the luminous aspect of the Absolute. It is *shakti* that imparts the necessary dynamism to the otherwise passive Shiva. These aspects of the Absolute - passivity and dynamism - are not to be seen as possessions. Such an interpretation would entail dualism in that the possessor would be completely distinct from his possessions. For the Trika, both passivity and dynamism are of the essential nature

of Shiva and so have to be viewed as a single unity. As a unity, they do not cause any internal division within the Absolute. Luminosity is the infinite light of Absolute Consciousness, whereas dynamism represents the creative activity of Consciousness as light. As both passivity and dynamism are identical with the Absolute, so, accordingly, the Absolute is referred to as Absolute Consciousness *(samvid)*. Luminosity and dynamism as Shiva and Shakti are the two aspects of Paramashiva as Consciousness *(samvid)*. Luminosity represents knowledge, whereas dynamism represents creativity (IPV I.8.II).

The Absolute of the Trika is not an impersonal and abstract being. The Absolute, rather, is God, and as God he is, in the fullest sense of the word, sovereign. It is as sovereign that God engages, without depending on anything, in the five cosmic activities of manifestation, preservation, absorption, obscuration and revelation (TA I.79). Since the manifest is the self-emission of the Absolute, so it means that the manifest categories, prior to their manifestation, exist as consciousness *(samvid)* in the Absolute (IPV I.5.I; 5.IO). The phenomenal categories, in their unmanifest condition, exist in terms of an integral I of the Absolute. The I of the Absolute is not to be equated with the empirical ego. It is, rather, the absolute consciousness of the Absolute. The absolute I has, thus, been spoken of as perfect *(paripurna)* in itself.

The universe and its categories, prior to their manifestation, exist as pure Ego *(aham)* within the Absolute. They manifest themselves as *this (idam)*. It is in terms of *this* that the Absolute appears as the variegated universe of diverse entities. While manifesting itself as the universe of diverse entities, the Absolute thereby appears as if its absolute powers of knowledge and action have been atomised. This process of the appearance of the Absolute is equated with a play, in which the actor, while identifying with the character, himself remains unchanged. The Absolute, while appearing as a limited or atomised phenomenal entity, remains in itself indivisible and unchanged. This divine drama is enacted to keep the creational manifestation going on for aeons. At the end of each aeon, there is withdrawal, which terminates in the absorption of the manifest into the pure subjectivity of the Absolute. At the time of dissolution, the non-liberated beings are pushed into the abyss of ignorance whereby the process of obscuration is actualised. While obscuring itself, the Absolute also obscures the divine potency of countless beings. When the concealing power of obscuration is removed, it is called the act of divine grace. It is through grace that the divine nature of one's self is realised. These five cosmic activities or powers that constitute the essential nature of the Absolute (TA I79).

The Nature of the Manifest

All the schools of Indian thought are of the view that cosmology and ontology are closely related to each other. Four main cosmological theories have been advanced by the various cosmologists. One of them thinks that the phenomena are composed of elements that are subtle and exist eternally. These subtle elements that compose the universe are the atoms *(anu)*. It is God who brings creational coherence into these elements, and thereby the creational manifestation is allowed to emerge. This theory of creation is spoken of as that of origination *(arambhavada)*. The philosophical school of thought that adheres to the theory of origination is Nyaya-Vaisheshika. This theory thinks of God as being merely the efficient cause of the universe. His function may be equated with that of a potter. As the potter fashions his various objects from the existing material, namely, clay, likewise God fashions the universe out of existing eternal atomic elements. God does not cause the universe *ex nihilo*. As an instrumental cause, God is not really the creator of the universe. Rather, his role is limited to that of a designer.

The second theory of creation is that of transformation *(parinamavada)*. It is the Samkhya-Yoga school that originally developed this theory of causation. The thrust of this theory is that the diverse component elements that are constitutive of the universe are but modifications of the primal materiality *(mula-prakriti, pradhana-tattva)*. When there is absolute equilibrium among the constituents *(gunas)* of primal materiality, then no modificatory evolution occurs in matter. When there is disturbance among the constituents, which are of the nature of peace *(sattva)*, of energy *(rajas)*, and of dullness *(tamas)*, then the primal materiality, through the process of self-modification *(parinama)*, passes through different phases of evolution. The primal materiality, in the process of its evolution, evolves into the various evolutes that compose the universe. The various components or categories that are constitutive of the universe are said to be a mixture of the three constituent processes. Insofar as the primal materiality is concerned, not only is it eternal, but also contains within it self all that appears in the manifest universe. The component elements that constitute the universe do not owe their existence to a fresh creation. They are rather mere manifestations of a primal materiality. The component elements, at the time of universal dissolution, are absorbed, through the reverse process

of submergence, by the primal materiality. In this theory of causation God is completely absent. The manifest universe does not owe its existence to God. The inherent laws within the primal matter are responsible for causing the evolutionary process that results in the actualisation of the objective universe. Likewise, these very laws cause the dissolution of the universe.

Trika Shaivism agrees with the Samkhya in its depiction of the evolutionary process, but disagrees on the subject of causation. Trika Shaivism does not think that the primal matter, which is insentient, is the cause of its own self-manifestation. It believes that it is God who is responsible for causing the primal matter to manifest itself as the objective universe. Further, the primal matter is not an eternal entity existing by itself or outside of God. Rather, it always exists within God. It is out of himself/herself that God emits the universe. This is why the Trika thinkers see the world as the self-extension of God.

The third theory of creation is that of appearance *(vivartavada)*. This theory is mainly subscribed to by the Advaita Vedanta School of Shankara. According to this theory, there is actually no creation. As creation does not exist, it only appears to exist. Since the world does not actually exist, it means that there has never been creation. What we think exists is, in fact, mere appearance. This appearance of the universe is linked to the dream-objects that appear in a dream. The objects of the dream appear to be real as long as the dream lasts. The objects of the dream, however, disappear once the dream comes to an end. Similarly the world appears to be real to the extent that we operate under the influence of ignorance *(avidya)*. Upon the negation of ignorance, the essential character of the universe becomes apparent. The Trika Shaivites, although non-dualists, reject this view of the reality of the world. Accepting the world to be real, they severely criticise all such theories that reduce the reality of the world to that of dream-objects (IPV 2.3.4).

The Pashupatas, Shaiva Siddhantins and Gorakhnathis have a theistically oriented theory of creation. They believe that it is Shiva who brings about modifications in the primal matter, and thereby allows the creational manifestation to take place. In this conception, God is seen merely as an efficient cause and not as the actual creator. He simply fashions the existing material into various designs and forms, and nothing more than that. If this is the case, then the primal matter has to be seen as the material cause of the universe, and as such, as an independent entity. There are, however, some from among the above schools who have identified primal materiality with Shakti, which is identified with the power of Shiva. This Samkhya conception of matter via Tantrism is equated with the feminine principle, namely, the Supreme Goddess. The Goddess as the consort of Shiva is seen to constitute the creative aspect of Shiva. It is through His innate power *(shakti)* that Shiva allows the manifestation of the universe to take place.

The Trika authors have developed their own specific theory of creation, which in contrast to the above theories of creation, is known as the principle of sovereign will (of God) *(svatantrya-siddhanta)*. According to this theory, it is the sovereign will of God that really is the cause of the manifest universe. God emits the universe out of Himself the moment He wills its manifestation. This willing of the manifestation of the universe is ascribed to divine playfulness. To be playful is the essential nature of God. God, while giving rise to the categories of existence *(tattvas)* out of Himself, is completely independent in engaging himself in this creative activity. As God emits every creational category out of Himself, so it is assumed that each category, prior to its emission, must necessarily be existing in Him as potential. This idea of an entity existing prior to its manifestation is directly borrowed from the Samkhya theory of causation. The Samkhya theory of causation says that every effect, prior to its actualisation, exists potentially in the cause. It amounts to saying that the entire universe exists as the very self of God, that is, infinite and eternal I. This divine Ego as Consciousness is not static or passive; it is of the nature of vibration *(spanda)*. Thus Supreme Consciousness is equated with vibratory movement, and it is on account of this vibratory nature of consciousness that God engages in the creative activity of manifestation.

The total number of manifestational categories is said to be thirty-six. The process of manifestation occurs from *Paramashiva* down to earth. The first five manifestational categories, from *Paramashiva* to *Shuddha Vidya* or *Sadvidya*, are termed pure *(shuddhadva)* on account of their not suffering from any kind of division or duality. *Paramashiva* as Absolute appears as Shiva and Shakti, the former representing the Absolute and the latter, Godhead. Shiva and Shakti, constitute as it were, the luminous and reflective aspects of the Absolute. The third manifestational category of pure creation is termed *Sadashiva*, or the eternal Shiva. This manifestational category of the Absolute is equated with God when absorbed in the playful activity of creational variety. The diversity that is found in creation is because of the activity of the Absolute as *Sadashiva*. The fourth

manifestational category is that of *Ishvara,* or the Lord. The Absolute manifests itself as *Ishvara* when engaged in the divine functions of Godhead. Finally, we have the category of *Shuddha Vidya,* or pure knowledge. The category of *Shuddba Vidya* is that manifestational category of the Absolute in terms of which the divine revelation as grace is accomplished. In other words, the appearance of the Absolute as pure knowledge denotes that the knowledge of this category is absolutely free from the conceptual fallacies that bedevil empirical modes of understanding. The first five manifestations of the Absolute are the fundamental appearances, accomplished through the total independence of the Absolute's will. As these five manifestations are pure, so each manifestational category shines as being identical with the infinite I-consciousness, which is the Absolute. From *Paramashiva* to *Shuddha Vidya* there is no awareness of duality whatsoever.

The manifestational categories from *Shuddha Vidya* downward belong to the realm of *maya,* or what is called impure creation *(asbuddhadha).* They are so called because their function is to obscure or conceal the non-dual nature of the I-Consciousness. It is from the *maya tattva* onwards that the process of manifestation is made gross.The obscuration of I-Consciousness is determined by the degree to which a particular category *(tattva)* is gross. Paramashiva, while manifesting himself in the form of gross categories, appears, on the one hand, as a limited sentient being, and, on the other, manifests himself, through his sovereign will, as an insentient element. The insentient elements of impure creation serve as the basis of what is called insentient creation (TA 9.I49). The sentient element, being covered by *maya* or impurity, is reduced to finitude, and so accordingly is called *anu* (atomic) or *pashu* (unfree). The bound being *(pashu),* on account of its limitedness and finitude, identifies I-Consciousness with the finite ego or self. By imposing the sense of limitation upon itself, the unfree being differentiates himself from others in terms of his empirical identity. This sense of differentiation results in what may be called self-forgetfulness, that is, he forgets the fact that he is non-different from the Absolute, and thereby also from the other. As the impure creation is pervaded by the impurity of *maya,* so it is *Īshvara* as the manifestational category of the Absolute that actualises the process of impure creation (TA 9.I48; I.6I, 79-80, 92; 3.I96, 206; 4.I0).

Trika Shaivism rejects the Samkhya theory of causality in terms of which the cause transforms itself into the effect, or should we say that the effect, prior to its actualization, is identical with the cause. The Trika rejects this theory in the context of cosmology. If God as cause of the universe is seen transforming Himself into phenomenal entities, then God suffers from internal division, which would destroy the notion of His indivisibility. In place of the Samkhya theory of causal transformation, the Trika postulates the theory of reflection *(pratibimbavada).* According to this theory, the universe is neither the transformation of Shiva nor of his Shakti. As the nature of God is pure luminosity, so it is this luminosity which projects God as the universe in the manner an image is reflected in a mirror. While being reflected as the universe, the luminosity of God remains intact (TA 3.44). By virtue of its luminous light God thereby illumines all phenomena. Prior to their manifestation or emission *(visarga),* all the phenomenal entities exist in the Absolute, which is none other than *Paramashiva.* Prior to their manifestation, the entire universe and entities therein shine forth as consciousness in the Absolute and it is their transcendental state *(paramartha-satta)* (IPV I.5.I; 5.7). The phenomenal entities, while shining as reflection, both rise and fall within the pure I-consciousness. It is on account of this rise and fall that the phenomenal entities suffer from temporal finitude. As they are appearances of the Absolute, so they come within the sphere of *abhasa:* the manifest categories are of the nature of psychic light *(abhasa),* which shines as the lustre of luminosity (IPV 3.I.2).

The Principle of Vibration

It was Vasugupta who for the first time enunciated the theory of vibration *(spanda)* in his primary text, the *Shivasutra.* The purpose of this theory is to point out that the essential nature of the Absolute is not only luminosity *(prakasha),* but also vibration *(spanda).* It is due to its dynamic nature that the Absolute engages in creative activity by giving rise to phenomena. Bhatta Kallata consolidated this conception of the Absolute as being luminous as well as dynamic in two important texts, namely, the *Spanda-karika* and *Spanda-sarvasva.* Bhatta Ramakantha and Bhatta Bhaskara, in their commentarial works, remark upon the significance of this idea of the Absolute as dynamic. Leading philosophers like Somananda and Utpala accepted this conception of the Absolute as being the basic tenet of Trika Shaivism. It was, however, Abhinavagupta who integrated this philosophic conception with both the theory and the practice of Trika Shaivism.

The idea of the Absolute as being dynamic seems to have arisen in opposition to Advaita Vedanta, a school that upholds the idea that the Absolute is sheer

luminosity, which means there is no dynamism to be found in it. Being peaceful *(shanta)* and passive, the Absolute of Advaita Vedanta is totally devoid of dynamism. To counter this conception of the Absolute as passive witness, the Trika thinkers added to it another dimension, that of dynamism. It is the innate dynamism of the Absolute that, impels as it were, it to manifest itself as the universe. The Buddhist concept of matter as being dynamic seems to have influenced the Trika thinkers here. The vibratory nature of consciousness, in the context of finite beings, carries within itself many types of psychophysical movements and activities. The diverse movements and activities of finite beings reflect, in a miniscule form, the dynamic nature of the Absolute. The non-differentiated state of vibration is of blissful nature, and is realised in that meditative state known as *turiya*, or the Fourth state. It is upon transcending the empirical states of consciousness, those of waking, deep sleep, and dreaming, that one comes to the Fourth. The Fourth state is a state of spiritual revelation. There is, however, a still higher state of spiritual illumination that is known as the *turiyatita,* that is, beyond the Fourth, and so, accordingly, is identified with the absolute transcendental state of pure Consciousness.

The term *spanda* is derived from the root *spadi* meaning, to move a little *(kinchit chalana).* Abhinavagupta equates this term in his commentary on the *Paratrimshika* with the spontaneous spiritual activity of pure Consciousness. And this spiritual activity of pure Consciousness is realisable through Shaivayoga (PTV 207-208). The Absolute as *Paramashiva* is Shiva precisely because of his being God. The Absolute is equated with Shakti on account of it's being the embodiment of Godhead. One of the essential aspects of Shakti is *spanda,* on account of which the Absolute engages in a twofold activity with regard to creation. This twofold activity of the Absolute expresses itself in the manifestation and dissolution of the universe. The concept of *spanda* has been explained in various ways in the Agamic literature. It has been described as *sphuratta* (twinkling), *ghurni* (dizziness), *urmi* (wave), *matsyodari* (the throb of a fish when out of water), and soon.

The Number of Manifestational Categories and Realms

Categories of existence, right from *Paramashiva* down to the earth, have been classified into thirty-six elements *(tattvas).* All the thirty-six categories have been reduced to five *kalas,* and each *kala* contains within itself a certain number of categories as well as realms *(bhuvanas)* and their specific kind of existents. The total number of realms that have been accepted by Trika Shaivism is said to be one hundred and eighteen, and these realms exist beyond the visible realm of which we are a part. Each realm is presided over by a Rudra, which is a form of Shiva, or by a Bhuvaneshvara, that is, by the Lord of the Realm. The nature of the existents that inhabit these realms is determined by the realm that they inhabit. The existents of these realms have been classified into seven types. Trika Shaivism maintains that the manifestation and dissolution of these realms as well as the process of bondage and liberation of existents therein is both controlled and directed by God through his manifold absolute powers. In order to govern these realms efficiently, God seems to have delegated some of the governing powers to the presiding deities of these realms. Each presiding deity is believed to be the embodiment of some divine power. The phenomenal manifestation occurs through certain stages of evolution, and each evolutionary stage gives rise to a certain number of categories. A category or element *(tattva)* represents the essence of several similar categories. It is this essence that binds them together into a whole (TS 69; IPV 3.I.2). The essence of an element is permanent, and so remains intact at the time of universal dissolution. The manifest categories, at the time of dissolution, are reduced to their respective essences. The categories emerge from these essences at the time of universal manifestation. Even though there are various categories, yet there is, in fact, only one category, and that is, *Paramashiva.* This is so because *Paramashiva* not only contains within himself the essence of all the categories, but also is the essence of everything (TA 9.2). *Paramashiva*, manifesting himself as the universe, appears as Shiva, Shakti, and Nara. It is on account of this triadic conceptual framework that Kashmir Shaivism is called *trika.* Correspondingly, the entire field of existence, too, has been classified into a tripartite state of unity *(abheda)*, unity-in-diversity*(bhedabheda),* and diversity *(bheda).* This classification of existence is equated with a triadic elemental division of *Shiva-tattva, Vidya-tattva,* and *Maya-tattva.* Since the path of objective meditation *(tattvadhyan)* accepts the number of categories of existence to be thirty-six, so it is this number that Trika Shaivism accepts as constituting the manifestational realm from *Paramashiva* down to earth. Further it is maintained that as the thirty-six categories have their rise and fall in *Paramashiva,* so the total number of categories is thirty-seven when *Paramashiva* is included in the list. As the categories of existence pertain to the manifestational realm, so they are referred to as objective categories meant for intellectual reflection *(prameya-tattva).* The first five categories, from *Shiva* to *Shuddha Vidya,* are free from

the distortions of *maya,* and so are said to be pure. The beings that inhabit these realms are also pure. Due to their purity, they are aware of their divine powers. As they do not identify the self with any insentient element, they thereby are aware of their identity with the absolute I-Consciousness. It is, thus, the undifferentiated awareness that is constitutive of the first five manifestational categories.The philosophic Absolute, when viewed from a theological perspective, is identified with *Paramashiva,* which is the thirty-seventh category when counted from the gross element of earth upwards. The Absolute as *Paramashiva* is described as having two innate aspects, namely, the static and dynamic. The static aspect of the Absolute corresponds to the passivity of consciousness as being a witness or light. It is in and through the dynamic aspect that the Absolute expresses the five cosmic powers of manifestation, preservation, withdrawal, obscuration and revelation. While manifesting itself in the form of manifestational categories, the Absolute, however, remains unchanged and undivided. It is the static aspect of the Absolute that really explains the indivisibility as the total unity of *Paramashiva.* It is in its static aspect that *Paramashiva* appears as Shiva, while the appearance of Shiva as Shakti occurs through its dynamic aspect (*Shivadrishti* 7.12-14).

Already it has been explained that *spanda* denotes the innate vibration within Shiva as Shakti. The initial vibration is directed towards the manifestation of phenomenal categories. The actualisation of this vibration results in the emergence of the categories of *Sadashiva* (or *Sadakhya)* and *Ishvara.* At this point of manifestation the vibration expresses itself as *Sadashiva* in terms of an inward movement, whereas outward movement is actualised in the form of *Īshvara* (IPV 3.I.5). All the manifestational categories are contained within Shiva and shine as infinite I-Consciousness. When innate vibration is directed outward, it shines forth as this *(idam)* of I-Consciousness, which indicates the sense of differentiation or duality. Upon the emergence of the sense of differentiation, consciousness thereby shines forth as, I am this *(ahamidam)* or this is myself *(idamaham),* which means that there is the duality of subject and object (IPV 3.I.3). This awareness of I as myself results in contrasting myself with the other. The sense of difference at this manifestational level is not so acute as to result in a kind of unbridgeable duality, which is the bane of empirical existence. There is both the sense of unity as well as diversity, and so this manifestational stage is termed as representing the state of unity-in-diversity *(paraparadasha).* Since this manifestational stage hangs between complete unity and diversity, so it has appropriately been called an intermediate stage of manifestation (IPV 3.I.5). When there is the experience of unity-in-diversity *(bhedabheda),* it is taken to be the fifth manifestational category called *Shuddha Vidya* or *Sadvidya.* In other words, it is at the level of fifth manifestational category that the experience of unity-in-diversity is actualised (IPV 3.I.3).

The evolutionary manifestational process up to the fifth category is termed as being pure on account of the absence of the dichotomising power of *maya.* Thus the entire manifestational process upto the fifth category is termed pure. Once the manifestational process goes ahead, then the dichotomising power of *maya* begins to operate. This process of dichotomisation is itself a creation of the Lord, or what is called *Ishvara*, which is the last category of pure creation (PTV II9). It is the creative will of the Lord that manifests itself in the form of *maya* (TA 9.I49-I50). The function of the category or *maya* is to conceal the essential nature of the Lord (IPV 3.I.7), and on account of this obscuration the Lord appears in the form of finite beings *(anu).* In addition to its obscuring function, *maya* is also the basic substance for the evolution of phenomenal categories (TS 77). At this point it seems that *maya* is made to serve the purpose that primal materiality *(prakriti)* is made to serve in Samkhya. It is the Samkhya concept of *prakriti* that is transformed into the creative power of God in the Trika Shaivism of Kashmir. It is Samkhya that has provided the necessary conceptual premises to Trika Shaivism on the basis of which an attempt is made to rationally explain cosmogenesis.

The experiencing subject, although essentially unlimited, experiences himself, within the temporal realm, as being finite and limited. The subject's subjectivity experiences itself as being limited on account of the concealing veils of *maya.* The function that is assigned to *maya* is to conceal the essential nature of the subject's subjectivity, and the consequence of this concealment is the experience of finitude. As a result of *maya* obscuring power the subject is deprived of the enjoyment of his own essential nature, which is that of bliss. This deprivation of self-enjoyment terminates in the agitative restlessness *(lolika)* of the subject (TA 9.62). The phenomenal subject, however, is not completely deprived of the experience of enjoyment. He does have the capacity, albeit a limited one, of experiencing delights objectively through his senses. This very capacity for enjoyment indicates that the subject's subjectivity is essentially of the nature of bliss. The ray of bliss penetrates one's subjectivity the moment *maya's* hold loosens its grip.

The limiting or obscuring powers *(kanchukas)* of *maya* have been classified into five types. The first limiting power, called *kaala* (time), limits the subject's field of action and consequently the subject remains unaware of his divine power of omnipotence. The second obscuring power of *maya* is that of *ashuddha-vidya* (impure knowledge). Time and space limit all forms of empirical knowledge or understanding. Whatever empirical knowledge we possess is a localised one. The limitations that *maya* imposes upon knowledge results in the deprivation of the subject's omniscience. The third obscuring power of *maya* is called *raga* (attachment). It is on account of attachment that the interests of the subject remain restricted. This restricted interest imposes such limitations upon the subject's field of action and knowledge that he finds it difficult, nay impossible, to cross over the barriers of his embodied existence. This limited interest also indicates that the individual seems to have no liking or preference for knowledge that is transcendent or spiritual. The fourth obscuring power that *maya* puts into operation is that of *niyati* (the law of restriction) which expresses itself in and through the operations of what we call objective Nature, whose laws operate in such a manner as to result in the curtailment of the subject's autonomy. Subject to the laws of Nature, the individual subject experiences such powerlessness that he is unable to act independently. The same is the case with knowledge. For the acquisition of knowledge he is completely dependent either on his senses or upon the objects that seem to exist independently of him. The individual existent, being subject to the laws of Nature, experiences himself as being dependent upon external factors in relation to knowledge and action (TA 9.210-1 1). Finally, we have *maya*'s obscuring power of *kaala*. It is on account of the obscuring power of time that the individual subject experiences himself as being finite. This experience of temporality deprives the subject of the joy of immortality. All these functions of *maya* prevent the individual from knowing who he essentially is. It is upon the removal of the obscuring veils of *maya* that the individual recognises that he is essentially divine, that is, identical with *Paramashiva*. This state of absolute knowledge results in the experience of bliss that is free from the distortions that *maya* inserts in the process of manifestation (TN 9.204).

Paramashiva becomes, as it were, an atomised experience on account of the concealing veils of *maya*. This atomised condition of the Absolute is called the condition of *purusha*. In other words, a limited individual is nothing else but *purusha*. At this point Trika Shaivism turns upside down the Samkhya concept of *purusha*. For the Samkhya School, *purusha* is passive, and so is in no manner involved in the operations of Nature *(prakriti)*. As *purusha* is pure intelligence, so it cannot, by any stretch of imagination, relate itself to that which is opposite to it, namely, matter. Although caught up in the web of embodied existence, yet its relationship with materiality is tenuous and is of the nature that exists between an object and its reflection. For the Trika, however, the condition of embodied existence itself is given the nomenclature of *purusha*, which means that *purusha* and *prakriti*, as is the case of Samkhya, are not dialectically opposed to each other; rather they complement each other. While complementing each other, *purusha* and *prakriti* thereby also enjoy each other. It is the divisionary power of *maya* that actualises the emergence of *purusha* and *prakriti* (TA 9.215). Upon its manifestation, *prakriti* carries within itself the three strands of pleasure, pain and ignorance, which are equated with the three constituent processes of *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*. To the extent these three constituents remain in a state of equilibrium, the manifestational process does not take place, which means that there is no appearance of pleasure, pain or ignorance. Once this equilibrium is disturbed, then there begins the evolutionary process of manifestation in terms of which the entire manifest order is given rise to. The manifest order, however, consists of entities that are either enjoyable or painful. Wherever goodness *(sattva)* is prevalent, there the limited individual has the experience of joy. This experience of limited joy is facilitated by Shiva's power *(jnana shakti)* of illuminating goodness. The limited individual experiences pain on account of the predominance of passion *(rajas)*. It is Shiva's infinite power of action *(kriya shakti)* that really appears in the form of the pain-giving passion. The diversity that is constitutive of the manifest order is because of Shiva's power of obscuration *(maya shakti)*. It is through the power of obscuration that everything, at the manifest level, is reduced to a state of dense darkness - and darkness is nothing else but the representation of ignorance (IPV 4.I.4). Darkness represents ignorance because it veils the revealing or illuminating power of knowledge. Knowledge and light go together, whereas ignorance associates itself with the absence of light, which is but darkness.

Paramashiva is spoken of as God or *Ishvara* when engaged in the five cosmic activities of manifestation, preservation, dissolution, obscuration and revelation. The objective process of manifestation begins the moment God descends to the abode of materiality. The very descent of God to this abode denotes that the equilibrium among the three constituent strands is

shaken up. This disturbance results in the emergence of twenty-three instrumental and objective categories (TA 9.225). God causes disequilibrium among the three constituent strands when he initiates a kind of stir within the womb of materiality. This stirring itself is counted as one more manifestational category between materiality and its product, namely, intelligence *(buddhi)*. It is intelligence that is the first objective manifestational category. With the emergence of intelligence comes into being the sense of I-ness *(ahamkara)*. Once the sense of ego has been actualised, there then emerge sixteen categories, which are the mind, five organs of perception, five organs of action, and five subjective elements of sound, touch, colour, taste, and smell.

The Classification of Impurity

Upon emitting out of itself the entire manifest order, the Absolute thereby atomises itself by appearing as a limited, temporal being. This sense of limitedness or of temporality comes to the fore on account of impurity, which is the product of *maya*. The basic function of impurity may be likened to that of mud which, when disturbed, muddies the transparency of water. Likewise impurity puts such a veil upon the inner eye of the individual that he is unable to see clearly as to what he actually is. This veiling of the vision is called ignorance. Once impurity, in the form of ignorance, becomes operative, then the individual experiences ontological separation from the Absolute. It is this sense of separation that deprives the individual from recognising himself as being essentially identical with *Paramashiva*, and thereby with everything that is constitutive of the world. Impurity, thus, may be seen as that process of obscuration of free will whereby the individual remains ignorant concerning his essential nature (TA 9.65-66).

As impure creation is the result of *maya's* operation, so *maya* leaves its imprint, in the form of basic impurity, upon the entire manifest order. The basic impurity *(maya)* undergoes a process of development, and at each stage of its development it is given a specific name. In the initial stage of its development, it is known to be of atomic *(anava)* nature. The atomic content of impurity denotes that it is of finite nature and, as such, expresses itself through finite beings. The individual who is under the influence of this impurity remains forgetful about his essential nature, which is that of infinite I-Consciousness (IPV 3.2.6). The finite consciousness, in contrast to infinite consciousness *(samvid)*, is as empty *(shunya)* as the vacuum within a pitcher. The very vacuity of finite consciousness tells us that its illuminating power, as it were, has been obscured to such an extent that it has lost complete capacity of revealing anything to itself (TA 6.9-10). The function of the *anava-mala*, thus, is to give rise to a kind of fractured awareness within the individual that terminates in the identification of the self, which in itself is complete and perfect, with pure vacuity. There are, however, some limited beings who, though under the influence of *anava-mala*, do not think of themselves to be as empty as the interior of a grave (IPV 3.2.4).

The fundamental philosophical thesis of Trika Shaivism is that nothing exists apart from God. This thesis is explained monistically in terms of which it is asserted that God is in everything and everything is in God. This identity between the Absolute and the phenomenal categories is recognised at that level of knowledge.

The fundamental philosophical thesis of Trika Shaivism is that nothing exists apart from God. This thesis is explained monistically in terms of which it is asserted that God is in everything and everything is in God. This identity between the Absolute and the phenomenal categories is recognised at that level of knowledge *(vidya)* where the operations of *maya* are neutralised. Insofar as an individual remains under the influence of *maya*, to that extent his mode of understanding will depend on the subject-object dichotomy. For such an individual the actualisation of knowledge will be impossible unless he not only objectifies his own consciousness, but also allows the objects out there to confront him. This confrontation between the knowing subject and the knowable object is the real basis of all forms of empirical knowledge. The knowing subject, while in the process of acquiring empirical knowledge, experiences the ontological difference between himself and the object that is to be known, between the objects of knowledge, between God and himself, and thereby between God and the world. This sense of difference or of separation is the result of what is technically called the impurity of *maya* *(mayiya-mala)*. The impurity of *maya* either functions together with the atomic impurity *(anava-mala)* or separately (IPV 2.2.9). It is upon the foundation of

atomic impurity upon which the impurity of *maya* builds its structure, as the former is the base for every kind of impurity.

Thus far we have analysed how the atomic impurity and the impurity of *maya* operate and function. The former impurity gives rise to a sense of limitedness or finitude, whereas the latter is responsible for creating the sense of ontological division. The third evolute of impurity is called the impurity of action *(karma-mala)*. This form of impurity is said to be the most powerful on account of it's being the result of all the past deeds that one has performed in previous existences. Upon the maturity of deeds, the individual has to reap the consequent fruit of what he has done in the past. What we ate at present is because of *karma*.

The Classification of Existents

As already pointed out above, there are various realms, and each realm is inhabited by such existents as are suited to it. There is thus a hierarchical correspondence between realms and the beings that inhabit them. It is the quality of the realm that really determines the quality of the beings that are to inhabit it. It is within this hierarchical framework that the beings that inhabit various realms have been classified into seven types. The lowest type of being is known as *Sakala*. The creatures of the *Sakala* type are at the lowest rung of the hierarchical structure on account of their being the most impure among all creatures. Creatures of this type exist under the influence of all the three impurities. Being most impure, the existential condition of such creatures too must be unbearable. They are born in existential conditions that one would never wish for (IPV 3.2.IO). The second type of creature, called *Pralayakala,* is a little higher than the first one. Beings of this type, at the time of cosmic dissolution, revert to the state of dormancy. Beings of this kind do not operate under the divisionary power *(kaala-tattva)* of *maya,* and consequently do not get involved in such obscuring powers of *maya* as, for example, *kanchukas.* Existing apart from the evolutes of *maya,* they are, therefore, also spoken of as *Akala*, that is, disembodied existents. This state of existence is not the result of good deeds or purity. It comes to be on account of their reversion, at the time of cosmic dissolution, to the state of dormancy, which results in their disembodiment. Being without a body, creatures of this type are accordingly spoken of as the beings of dissolution. It is due to their disembodied existence that these creatures gain freedom from the operations of *maya* during the period of dissolution (IPV 3.2.6, 7). At the end of cosmic dissolution, that is, upon the emergence of manifest order, the creatures of this type regain their embodied form of existence, and consequently are subject, like any other embodied existent, to the cycle of transmigration (TA 9.I 39).

The third kind of creature on the hierarchical ladder of ascent is known as *Vijnanakala,* that is, the cognitive creature. Creatures of this type are free from the divisionary power of *maya,* and this freedom is theirs due to their capacity for knowing the Absolute. The knowledge of identity that they have of the Absolute is of partial nature, for the cognitive experience of identity pertains only to the luminous, and not to the dynamic aspect of the Absolute. This partial knowledge of the Absolute enables them to rise above the state of vacuity, which is the lot of *Sakala* beings. As a result of this partial knowledge of the Absolute, the *Vijnanakala* beings arrive at the threshold of pure I-Consciousness, which means that a little striving is yet needed for attaining the perfect cognitive experience of identity. This little striving would enable these creatures to attain a higher state of existence whereby perfect cognition of identity may be realised. Beings qualitatively higher than the *Vijananakala* are known as *Mantras* as well as *Vidyeshvaras,* that is, masters of knowledge. Beings of this kind have the power and ability to achieve perfect cognition of identity with the Absolute as Pure Consciousness *(samvid).* Not only do they experience the Absolute as Pure Consciousness, but also come to realise their divine powers. These beings, however, still experience the phenomenal order in terms of difference, that is, in terms of this rather than I. This sense of difference with regard to phenomenality is the result of the impact that the *mayiya-mala* has upon them (IPV 3.2.9).

There are two types of beings that are pure and completely free from the three types of impurity: the *Mantreshvaras* and *Mantramaheshvaras.* Their spiritual maturity is of an order high enough to ensure that their cognitive experience of the Absolute is in terms of unity-in-diversity *(bhedabheda)* (IPV 3.I.2). The experience of unity-in-diversity denotes that the spiritual journey has not yet attained perfection. In terms of subjective experience, it means that these beings have only partially experienced the Fourth state *(turiya).* Although no active impurity of any kind is to be found in these beings, yet inactive seeds of basic-impurity *(anava-mala)* still linger in them. These beings still have to work out their salvation in terms of attaining a state of existence that is totally spiritual. It is the spiritual being alone who, upon merging in the Absolute, shines forth as an autonomous subject. For such a spiritual being the experience of objective existence as this-ness merges in the I-ness of subjectivity.

The Classification of the Principle of Animation

The principle of animation for the various beings corresponds to their mode of existence or spiritual status. The basic principle of animation is called *prana*. It is on account of the breath that the biological functions of embodied existents becomes possible. Once animated by *prana,* the living creatures are thereby differentiated from entities that are insentient or lifeless. All types of existents, from *Sakala* to *Akala*, function in and through the power of *prana*. *Prana* as the power of animation operates differently at various levels of animation. The operation of *prana,* for example, is quite different at the level of waking from what it is when one is in deep sleep. Similarly it functions differently for different beings, depending upon the nature of their mode of existence. *Prana* acts upon *Pralayakala* beings in a manner quite different from the way it acts upon beings of the *Vijnanakala* type. *Prana,* the classification of which goes back to the Vedic texts, is of five kinds, namely, *prana, apana, samana, udana,* and *vyana*. *Prana* and *apana* are said to be the two aspects of life force essential for the sustenance of the life of those beings that have an embodied mode of existence *(sakala)* (IPV 3.I.I9). When *prana* and *apana* merge, through the yogic practice of *pranayama,* into each other, and thereby eliminate their respective particularity, then emerges a state of awareness that is characterised by cosmic unity. Life force, thus, has one more function apart from keeping embodied existents alive — and this is to allow the emergence of the awareness of unity. This merger of *prana* and *apana* into each other also denotes the dissolution of one into the other. On account of this merger, awareness shines forth in terms of I-Consciousness. This state of dissolution, or of non-particularity, usually occurs in the state of deep sleep. The state of unity arising upon the merger of *prana* and *apana* into each other results in the emergence of the state of *samana,* or the equalising state. The state of *samana* is actualised in the state of *sushupti,* which corresponds to the dreamless state (IPV 3.2.I9). As the state of *sushupti* represents total rest, so it is responsible for energising animation itself. The beings upon which the *samana* principle of animation is operational are known as *Pralayakalas*. As the *samana* breath emerges upon the dissolution of *prana* and *apana,* so the *Pralayakala* beings, while existing as disembodied existents during the period of cosmic dissolution, actualise the state of dissolution, experienced only when one is in deep sleep. There, thus, is a close connection between *samana,* deep sleep, and the beings of *Pralayakala*. The fourth state of animation, known as *udana,* is a state in which thought-process comes to a point of complete cessation. As a consequence of this cessation, the sense of egoity disappears, which means that I-ness of the Supreme Consciousness shines forth in its full glory. In this state of cessation, the mind halts its activity of reflection and of conceptualisation, and so it has been equated with the yogic state called the Fourth state *(turiya)*. The *udana* principle of animation operates usually among the *Vijnanakala* beings. The spiritual glow of the *udana* state also gets intensified among the beings known as the *Mantras, Mantreshvara,* and *Mantramaheshvara*. The *yogin* who has attained this state experiences the rising up of a burning sensation in the spinal cord *(sushumna)* towards the top of the head (IPV 3.2.20). This burning sensation is the intimation concerning the arousal of *kundalini* which, as the energy *(shakti)* of Shiva, represents the Goddess. The complete arousal of the Kundalini is accomplished when the state of *vyana* is reached. The *vyana* state of animation results in the experience of complete unity or what may be called penetration *(samavesba)*. This perfect undifferentiated state exists only in the Absolute, that is, *Paramashiva*. Accordingly it is known as that state that transcends the Fourth *(turiyatita)* (TL 6.I86).

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The Concept of Divine Grace

The final cosmic activity of God is said to be that of revelation, or the stage in which He reveals Himself as He is. This self-disclosure on the part of God is a consequence of His grace *(shaktipata)*. On account of divine grace there arises the initial movement for liberation in the individual being. Upon the emergence of this stir for liberation, the individual directs his effort towards knowing how God's disclosure may be actualised. Trika Shaivism is of the view that it is God's grace that should be seen as the mainspring of an

individual's search for liberation. There is too little possibility that man by himself can even entertain such a thought, let alone seek liberation. Grace as the cause for liberation denotes that an individual is totally dependent upon God to the extent he remains unliberated (IPVI.I.I.).

God's grace descends upon individuals without any distinction or partiality. The effect of grace is felt to the extent that impurities become non-operational. As the impact of impurities upon each individual is different both in dimension and intensity, so the working of grace also differs from individual to individual. There are individuals who function densely surrounded by impurities, and there are individuals who have thinned, through religious practices, the impact of impurities. The thinning of impurities is also dependent upon the measure of maturity these individuals have attained, as it is in a graduated fashion that the ripening of the self or the culling out of impurities *(malapaka)* occurs. The working of grace will bear its fruit much faster in those who have attained maturity through thus culling out impurities, while the ones in whom the impurities are yet flourishing may not experience the workings of grace in the same measure as those on the threshold of abrogating their impact.

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Trika Shaivism is of the view that grace should not be treated as being the result of one's religious deeds. Grace is purely a free gift from God (TA 13.256-57). The result of meritorious deeds is threefold. The good deeds may determine: (I) the future birth of an individual in some specific abode *(loka)* or species; (2) the span of life *(ayu)* that the individual may live, and (3) the kind of pleasures he may experience. Thus, neither grace nor liberation is seen to be a consequence of one's meritorious deeds in this typology. Meritorious deeds, instead of abolishing the wheel of becoming, only enhance it. The distinctiveness that differentiates good deeds from evil ones lies in the fact that the former may provide better conditions for one's rebirth, whereas the latter may not. Action, whether good or bad, terminates in a definite fruit, and the quality of the fruit is dependent upon the quality of action. All said and done, one's present or future rebirth is determined solely by the quality of the actions one performs.

But why should God bestow grace gratuitously upon individuals without their asking for it? It is the very nature of God, maintain the Trika thinkers, to bestow grace upon people. It is the playful free will of God that is the real cause of grace. The descent of grace upon an individual occurs in accordance with His free will, which, according to the Trika, is His essential nature. While pouring down His grace upon people, God does not necessarily take into consideration whether they have sinned or not. Grace is meant for the sinner primarily, which also means that God does not make any distinction between the sinner and the righteous when it comes to the question of grace. This aspect of grace is well described by Utpala when he writes: 'Sir, you should have taken into consideration the merits and demerits of a person when bestowing your grace upon him; but you never do so.' In the second half of the verse he remarks: 'But, having played this game with me, why are you now delaying the dawning of realisation within me ?'(see the *Shivastotravali)*.Trika Shaivism, while accepting the role of divine grace for hastening the process of liberation, does not at the same time discount self-effort as a means of reaching the soteric goal. Self-effort is seen as one of the important ingredients for the development of inner spirituality. The very attempt at self-effort, however, is seen as the result of divine grace. It self-effort is isolated from divine grace, then there is all the possibility of its transforming into an egoistic enterprise. It would mean that an individual does not need the help of God to pursue his spiritual path. Such an interpretation of self-effort is not acceptable to the Trika thinkers. The bonded individual, however strong of will he may be, is always in need of divine grace. This dependence on grace discloses the fact that man is a contingent being insofar as he leads an embodied mode of existence. Trika Shaivism, thus, maintains that they alone persevere in the path of self-effort who remain conscious of divine presence, or, in other words, upon whom God pours down his grace in abundance. The divine grace of God may be seen as the initial point of movement towards salvation. It is on account of grace that there emerges within the individual love for God. Love and God's grace, thus, go together in helping the individual on to the path of liberative self-realisation (TA 13.276).Trika Shaivism accepts

devotional love of God, and thereby divine grace, as a legitimate spiritual means of reaching the specific soteric goal of liberation. It is the divine grace of God which, on the one hand, is seen as the fundamental cause for the emergence of love for God within the individual's heart and, on the other, it is really one's love for God that terminates in the descent of grace *(Shivastotravali* 8.I). Once grace begins its work in the recipient, it directs the recipient to an appropriate preceptor. The preceptor, too, showers his grace by expounding the theoretical knowledge contained in the Trika system. The thrust of this knowledge is to enable the disciple to grasp intellectually what the nature of ultimate Reality is, and the nature of the relationship, if any, between it and the world. In addition to theoretical knowledge, the preceptor also imparts knowledge concerning the practice of Shaivayoga. It is through the practice of Shaivayoga that the disciple is empowered to know who he essentially is. The preceptor also, through his spiritual powers, burns up impurities within the disciple. This is the spiritual trajectory that the disciples mostly have to travel. There are, however, some individuals who do not have to go through the above process. These exceptional individuals are so fortunate that God bestows upon them grace that is speedy and intense. As a consequence of this intense grace the seeker does not have to approach a preceptor. Whatever knowledge such a seeker needs for his salvation arises spontaneously within him. This spontaneously arising divine knowledge is called *pratibha* (TA I 3.I40), that spiritual glow that always shines, that is the luster of consciousness. This spiritual glow of consciousness is present in all living creatures (TA I 3. I35).

The divine grace of God is said to be of two kinds: liberation-oriented grace and pleasure-oriented grace. The former creates within the individual such an earnest desire for liberation that he seeks nothing else but liberation, whereas the latter terminates in the enjoyable experiences of divine powers *(siddhis)* and not in liberation. Thus the former is spoken of as being transcendent *(para)* and the latter as being worldly *(apara)* (TA I3.254, 256). The grace that leads to transcendence is either intense *(tivara),* medium *(madhya)* or slow *(manda).* This is also the case with non-transcending grace. The grace that is intense gives immediate results, whereas grace that is of the medium kind takes time, and the grace that is slow may take a long period of time to enable the recipient to reach his goal. Trika Shaivism's understanding of grace, in the final analysis, tells us that whenever one seeks liberation of worldly goals, one is dependent upon grace. This dependence upon grace points to the fact that man as a creature of temporality is contingent, and so, entirely dependent on God, thus reaffirming the interdependent nature of human relationships.

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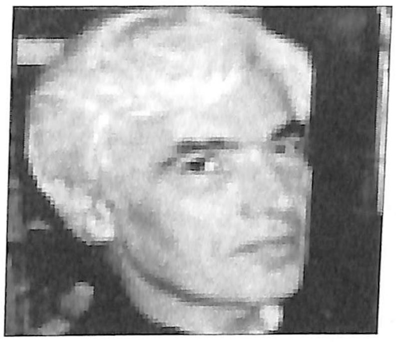
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Analysis



Abhinavagupta and the Word: Some Thoughts[1]

Prof. Raffaele Torella

The speculations on the nature of the word are indeed one of the threads that unite the diverse aspects of Abhinavagupta's vast work - aspects so diverse from each other that they have made some scholars think of a temporal division of phases (aesthetic, religious, philosophical), which seems to me hardly to correspond to the facts. All these trends coexist at the same time and nourish each other. One may only think that Abhinavagupta sees a hierarchy in them, but it is always a hierarchy projected into an all-encompassing totality, such as that of the *paramādvaita*, which makes any single highest level provisional.

Besides being one of the possible centres of Abhinavagupta's doctrine, the speculations on *vāc* also are one of the main intersection points of the religious and philosophical traditions that nourish his teaching. In the Śaiva scriptures, in the Buddhist *pramāṇa* tradition and in Bhartṛhari's work, the word, in its manifold aspects, holds a prominent position.

Besides being one of the possible centres of Abhinavagupta's doctrine, the speculations on *vāc* also are one of the main intersection points of the religious and philosophical traditions that nourish his teaching. In the Śaiva scriptures, in the Buddhist *pramāṇa* tradition and in Bhartṛhari's work, the word, in its manifold aspects, holds a prominent position. Generally speaking, the Tantras of all tendencies deal with the nature of *vāc* and its manifestations. It is probably the weight given to mantra by all these texts - however different they may be in tendency and ideology - that firstly induces them to delve into the essence of sound and the word, in order to provide yogic and ritual practices with a theoretical framework. These speculations are connected in some way with the speculations and myths on *vāc* in the Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas and mainly concern three points : *vāc* seen as a sometimes supreme sometimes subordinate creative deity; its stages of manifestation; its relation to the mind and cognitive activity. A partly distinct trend - this too largely present in the Tantras of all tendencies - is represented by the speculations on the phonemes, which are seen as the paradigmatic forms of the principles that constitute the universe. In their highest reality they form the very body of *vāc*. This trend also gives rise to reflections of a mystical-philosophical order, for the most part firmly grounded in phonetical doctrine. In this case, too, one can glimpse a yogic and ritual background; let us think of the very old practices of the imposition of phonemes or syllables (*bīja*) on the various parts of the adept's body or on *maṇḍalas*. In this ambit one can notice the sign of an identification of the phoneme with its grapheme which grammatical thought usually keeps rigorously separate and distinct; in this case, it is ritual that succeeds in dignifying writing in a such a markedly oral cultural universe (cf Torella 2011: 197-211). Even though the speculations on *vāc* can be found, generally speaking, in all the scriptures that may be defined 'tantric', the tradition which Abhinavagupta more directly refers to, namely the Bhairava Tantras, and in particular the Kula and Trika Tantras, differs from the others as regards the greater importance and extension these speculations have in the structure of the text and,

1 Revised version of the article "The Word in Abhinavagupta's *Bṛhad-vimarśinī*", in: R. Torella et al. (eds.), *Le Parole e i Marmi. Studi in onore di Raniero Gnoli nel suo 70° compleanno*, 2 vols., Serie Orientale Roma, IsIAO, Roma 2001, pp. 853-874.

above all, as regards the diverse evaluation of the role of *vāc*.

A sign of the difference in attitude, within the Śaiva ambit, between the advaita tradition and the Śaivasiddhānta is furnished by the ontological level attributed to the elements that constitute the so-called six 'paths' (*adhvan*). Abhinavagupta and his followers refer to a first differentiation between signifier and signified (*vācaka*, *vācya*; *vācaka* are phonemes, mantras and *padas*, while *vācya* are *kalās*, principles and worlds) and assign supremacy to the *vācaka*, and within it to the phonemes. This position is basically shared by the Pāñcarātra tradition.[2] On the contrary, the Siddhāntin usually assigns supremacy to the *vācya* or *artha* side, and within it to the *kalās*.[3] In some cases (Brunner 1977: XVII), the three *vācaka* or śabda paths are even absorbed into the path of the worlds (the lowest path for the Kāśmīrian *advaita*).[4] In the 'realist' outlook of the Śaivasiddhānta the word is finally only an instrument having its ontological centre of gravity in meaning, in the thing expressed,[5] which indirectly belittles the expressive aspect and has as a consequence that the word principle itself cannot ascend in the hierarchy of the *tattvas* beyond a certain level. It is known, indeed, that in the Śaivasiddhānta doctrine *vāc*, even in its highest form, belongs to the sphere of the *bindu*, separate from Consciousness. As Rāmakaṇṭha says in *Nādakārikā* 18 (Filliozat Ed.),

> *seyam avasthā kaiścit padavidbhir varṇyate kriyāśakteḥ /*
> *iha punar anyaivoktā puruṣāsamavāyinī ca yasmāt //*
>
> "Some grammarians describe this Word as a mode of being of Kriyāśakti. In our system, on the contrary, the Word is considered as being different from Kriyāśakti since it [the Word] is not inherent in the soul".

And again (20a): *puṃśakter bhinnā* "[the Word] is distinct from the power of the soul (or, in Aghoraśiva's interpretation: "distinct from each soul and its power"). A very similar statement is to be found in the *Ratnatrayaparīkṣā*: after giving an account of the four levels of the word upheld by the *śabdabrahmavādin*s (so called by Aghoraśiva in the *Ullekhinī* thereon) by quoting the famous passage incorporated into the *Vākyapadīya* (*Vākya Padīya*), Śrīkaṇṭha sharply distinguishes the 'sun' of the *śabdabrahman* from the real 'sun' of the Lord (78cd-80).[6]

The position of the Śaiva *advaita* scriptures is very different. It is true that we cannot expect diffuse theoretical elaborations from them, but what can be gathered from their usually scanty indications is enough to show, first of all, a full awareness of the power of the word. The phonemes are often presented as sometimes terrific sometimes benevolent deities, able to liberate man as well as to enmesh him in the saṃsāra (cf. *Spandakārikā* III.13-15, *Śivasūtravimarśinī* p. 48-49, *Śivasūtravārttika* pp. 60-61, The word permeates knowledge and, consequently, the objects of knowledge. In its highest form the word is identified with supreme consciousness itself. As Abhinavagupta says in the *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvivṛtivimarśinī* (*ĪPVV* II pp. 195-196) against the grammarians, to the extent that they seem to identify the totality of the word with that which is only one of its levels of manifestation:

> *iha tāvat parameśvaraḥ śabdarāśiḥ, śaktir asya bhinnābhinnarūpā mātṛkādevī, vargāṣṭakaṃ rudraśaktyaṣṭakaṃ pañcāśad varṇāḥ pañcāśad rudraśaktayaḥ*
>
> For us, the mass of sounds (śabdarāśi) is the supreme Lord himself, the goddess Mātṛkā [or the alphabet in the usual sequence]- both distinct and not distinct [from Him] - is His Power, the eight alphabetic classes are the eight Powers of the Rudras, the fifty phonemes are the fifty Powers of the Rudras.[7]

The other source from which Abhinavagupta receives the doctrine of the all-encompassing nature of *vāc*, this

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2 See for example *Sātvatasaṃhitā* XIX.127-138 and *Lakṣmītantra* XXII.10-11ab. They list the *adhvan*s in the same hierachical order (*varṇa, kalā, tattva, mantra, pada* and *bhuvana*), which is different from the Kāśmīrian Advaitin's (also as regards the meaning of *kalā* and *pada*), but significantly also assigns the lowest and highest positions to *varṇa* and *bhuvana* respectively. Cf. also the explicit statement found in *Lakṣmītantra* XVIII.21-22ab (see below n. 5). Cf. Dvivedi 1982:18-19.

3 Cf. e.g. *Ratnatrayaparīkṣā* 87cd-88ab *tattvādhvā bhuvanādhvā ca varṇādhvā ca padātmakaḥ // mantrādhvā vyāpakas teṣāṃ kalādhvā bindum āśritaḥ /*.

4 The *Svacchandatantra* and its commentary by Kṣemarāja furnish an interesting example of the two doctrines facing each other. This Tantra, which is in many aspects close to the Śaivasiddhānta, presents in straightforward terms a Siddhānta-like doctrine: IV.95cd-97ab *bhuvanavyāptitā tattveṣv anantādiśivāntake || vyāpakāni ca ṣaṭtriṃśat mantravarṇapadātmakāḥ | tattvāntarbhāvinaḥ sarve vācyavācakayogataḥ || kalāntarbhāvinas te vai nivṛttyādyāś ca tāḥ smṛtāḥ*. Kṣemarāja, for his part, totally disregarding the unequivocal text, simply goes on to give a detailed account of the matter according to the advaitin outlook; for this purpose he 'misunderstands' the word °antarbhāvinas ([*mantra, varṇa, pada* are] 'included in', i.e. pervaded by, [the *tattva*s, and the latter by the *kalā*s]) and gives it a causative meaning (vol. I p. 158 *tattvāni antarbhāvayantīti kṛtvā* [*mantra, varṇa, pada* are] include, pervade, the *tattvas*').

5 Or, at least, it belongs to a lower stratum of the cognition process. On the diametrically opposite side stand texts like the already cited *Lakṣmītantra* XVIII.21-22ab *śabdodayapuraskāraḥ sarvatrārthodayaḥ smṛtaḥ / arthaśabdapravṛttyatmā śabdasya sthūlatā hi sā // bodhonmeṣaḥ smṛtaḥ śabdaḥ śabdonmeṣo 'rtha ucyate /*.

6 Cf. Aghoraśiva's commentary on 80cd *tām eva vāṇīṃ sūkṣmākhyām āhur ātmavido janāḥ: ātmasvarūpavidas tu śaivās tāṃ sūkṣmākhyāṃ bindukāryabhūtāṃ śabdavṛttim eva manyante, na tu puruṣasamavāyinīm*. On the Ratnatrayaparīkṣā see Sferra 2007.

7 II pp. 195-196 *iha tāvat parameśvaraḥ śabdarāśiḥ, śaktir asya bhinnābhinnarūpā mātṛkādevi, vargāṣṭakaṃ rudraśaktyaṣṭakaṃ pañcāśad varṇāḥ pañcāśad rudraśaktayaḥ*.

time profoundly and originally elaborated, is represented, as we said, by Bhartṛhari's work. Thus, Abhinavagupta's ideas on the word turn out to be the elaboration of two distinct components: the esoteric one, deriving from the Śaiva scriptures, and the linguistic-philosophical one, deriving from Bhartṛhari's teaching, which, however, also includes a scriptural and esoteric layer and, in turn, comes to be the source many later scriptures refer to.[8] An interesting example of the merging of these two different traditions and their terminologies may be found in a passage from the *Tantrāloka* (*TĀ* XI.71ff). I can summarize it - along with Jayaratha's comments - as follows. The phonemes of ordinary language are generated by non-māyic phonemes, independent of conventions. The latter constitute the power of the māyic ones and are in turn, so-to-speak, the essence of consciousness itself. When you hear a sentence pronounced by another person, you cannot understand it if your consciousness/understanding (*pramā*) is 'covered' (*āvriyate*). You can repeat the phonemes in their order, but you cannot understand the meaning. To understand the meaning, you have to gain possession of your own *pramā*, which depends in turn on the obtainment of your own freedom, i.e. 'agency' (*svātantrya*, *kartṛtā*). If you experience this awakening of *pramā* (*pramāprabodha*, *pratibhā*), you will obtain the agency not only as regards the understanding of others' sentences but also regarding the creation of your own sentences. There is a gradation of *pratibhā* '(intuition', 'insight') depending on how much conventions are made to revert to their sources, till they attain the plane of the original (i.e. non-māyic) phonemes, which are, as we have seen, the very essence of consciousness (cf. Torella 2004). These various degrees range from the understanding-production of ordinary sentences to the elaboration of śāstras etc. Thus, understanding and producing sentences are the two sides of a coin. He who rests in this *pratibhā* becomes proficient in poetry and eloquence; he who proceeds even farther on, reaching the height of supreme consciousness, obtains *sarvajñāna* and *sarvakriyā*.

Here it is not a question of *vāc* as the faculty of articulating sounds or as the sounds thus produced, such as the language of men, but rather of the power presiding over this activity and corresponding to the very agent subjectivity of the Lord in the form of *vimarśa* 'reflective awareness'.

The scriptural and Bhartṛharian components are refined, made more explicit and deepened through the scrutiny of Dharmakīrti's criticism, which is always carefully and respectfully evaluated. This paper proposes to examine some relevant points in the *ĪPVV*. The first concerns the levels of the word, which is a topic of central importance in the ambit of the speculations on *vāc*. Abhinavagupta dwells on this theme - and at even a greater length - also in other works, particularly in the *Parātriṃśikāvivaraṇa* and *TĀ*. But, in my opinion, the treatment in the *ĪPVV* has some motives of special interest. As is known, the *ĪPVV* is the commentary that Abhinavagupta devoted to the *Īśvarapratyabhijñā-ṭīkā* or °*vivṛti*, a fundamental work by Utpaladeva, unfortunately now almost totally lost,[9] which in turn commented on the *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā* (*ĪPK*) and *svavṛtti*. Due to its very nature, the *ĪPVV* allows us to glimpse, through Abhinavagupta's discourse, the original position of Utpaladeva and, in most cases, also that of Somānanda which Abhinavagupta continuously refers to (indeed, just like Utpaladeva, Abhinavagupta too wrote a commentary on the *Śivadṛṣṭi*, the *Ālocana* now lost). This puts us in the best position to grasp the different evaluation of Bhartṛhari's teaching given by Somānanda, on the one hand, and by Utpaladeva-Abhinavagupta, on the other (cf. Torella 2009). In saying 'Utpaladeva-Abhinavagupta' I implicitly say that a scrutiny of this section of the *ĪPVV* as well as of others enables us to shift the centre of gravity of the Pratyabhijñā doctrines towards Utpaladeva. Most of the times Abhinavagupta has more precisely the merit of having elaborated and made explicit what had had its fist formulation in the *Ṭīkā*.

In verse I.5.13 of the *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā* Utpaladeva mentions for the first (and last) time *Parā Vāc*, identifying it with the very Power of the Lord:

> *citiḥ pratyavamarśātmā parā vāk svarasoditā* |
>
> *svātantryam etan mukhyaṃ tad aiśvaryaṃ paramātmanaḥ* ||

8 Not to be overlooked is also the Mīmāṃsā component (cf. Torella 2004: 182-183).
9 The only extant long fragment has been edited and translated in Torella 2007a, b, c, d; Torella 2012.

"Consciousness has as its essential nature reflective awareness; it is the supreme Word that arises freely. It is freedom in the absolute sense, the soveregnty of the supreme Self." (transl. Torella 2002:120)

Abhinavagupta (*ĪPVV* II p.187) hastens to make an obvious distinction, which however must not have seemed so obvious to Somānanda if he insisted so much on it in the *Śivadṛṣṭi*. Here it is not a question of *vāc* as the faculty of articulating sounds or as the sounds thus produced, such as the language of men, but rather of the power presiding over this activity (Utpaladeva in the *Ṭīkā*, cited ibid., speaks of *vākśakti*) and corresponding to the very agent subjectivity of the Lord in the form of *vimarśa* 'reflective awareness'. If the body of the Lord is made of mantras - above all, the mantra par excellence *AHAM* 'I' - the word is where all the mantras arise, remain in existence and dissolve. In short, this is not *śabda* but *śabdana* 'power of verbalization, of symbolization', which makes reflective awareness possible and even constitutes its very essence. After establishing that the verse refers to the supreme plane of *vāc* (*ādyā vāc* in the *Vṛtti*), the *Ṭīkā* goes on to describe the phases, beginning with the last one, represented precisely by the vocal faculty, the tongue and sounds and words it produces.

Bhartṛhari is generally considered the upholder of the tripartition of the word, explicitly stated in verse I.159 of the *Vākya Padīya*, while the Śaiva tradition decidedly leans towards the quadripartition. As is well-known, this is the main cause of Somānanda's fierce criticism in the *Śivadṛṣṭi*.

On this plane there are further differentiations, first and foremost, between a word fully accomplished in its sonority (*saghoṣa*) and one pronounced in a low voice, secretly (*aghoṣa*).[10] Both are fully articulated; what distinguishes them is the fact that the former can be heard by others and the latter cannot. The sense of hearing here plays the rolè of protagonist. This role progressively loses importance as the complexity of what is articulated increases: we go from the phoneme to the short word and, lastly, to the long sentence where hearing has to be integrated with other functions, such as memory, connection of distant segments, and so on, all of them being equally necessary for understanding to emerge. This is the plane of *Vaikharī*, the word 'which lies in the body' according to a traditional etymology. The next plane is that of the word as a mental event. Here the word is still articulated, comes about in succession and acts as the substratum of the various forms of discursive thought (*vikalpa*). We have *Madhyamā*, says Abhinavagupta ibid., when the internal faculty - that is, the mind, the intellect and the sense of the ego - is acting and brings about discursive thought in the form of imagination, deliberation and ego-reference. It is called *Madhyamā* because the power of reflective awareness, which is its very essence, here impels the internal faculty which rests precisely in the intermediate plane (*madhyabhūmi*), that of the octuple body (*puryaṣṭaka*) and the vital energy or breath. This level of the word refers to a reality divided into subject and object (of this discursive thought), grasps it and expresses it in an internal language which is as diversified and successive as the content being expressed. It is defined by the term *cintana* 'thinking, deliberating'.

Up to this point the relation with Bhartṛhari has no problematic aspects. Abhinavagupta and Utpaladeva do follow the treatment found in the *Vākya Padīya* and the *Vṛtti*, only they enrich it and adapt it to the schemes and terminology of the Pratyabhijñā. The crucial point comes with *Paśyantī*, not so much concerning its description as concerning the claim that it constitutes the highest level. Bhartṛhari is generally considered the upholder of the tripartition of the word, explicitly stated in verse I.159 of the *Vākya Padīya*, while the Śaiva tradition decidedly leans towards the quadripartition. As is well-known, this is the main cause of Somānanda's fierce criticism in the *Śivadṛṣṭi*. In fact, things are more complex than they may seem. In the Brahmanic tradition, which Bhartṛhari refers to, there are traces of both a quadripartite system (cf. the famous passages from the *Ṛgveda catvāri vāk párimitā padāni* ... and *catvāri śṛṅgā* ...,[11] already quoted by the *Nirukta* (*Pariśiṣṭa*, XIII.7 and 9

10 Cf. *Svacchandatantra* II.146cd-147ab *ātmanā śruyate yas tu tam upaṃśuṃ vijānate* / / *pare śṛṇvanti yaṃ devi saśabdaḥ sa udāhṛtaḥ* / (*Uddyota* thereon; *upaṃśusaśabdau tu sūkṣmasthūlaprayatnāyāṃ vaikharyām*).

11 *ṚgVeda* I.164.45 *catvāri vāk párimitā padāni tāni vidur brāhmaṇā ye manīṣíṇaḥ* / *gúhā trī́ṇi nihitā néṅgayanti turī́yaṃ vācó manuṣyā vadanti* / /. *ṚgVeda* IV.58.3 *catvāri ś.ṛṅgā tráyo asya pādā dvé śīrṣé saptá hástāso asya* / *trídhā baddhó vṛṣabhó roravīti mahó devó mártyān ā́ viveśa* / /. *See also Maitrāyaṇīyasaṃhitā* I.11.5 *sā vai vāk sṛṣṭā caturdhā vyabhavat* etc., quoted in *Nirukta* (*Pariśiṣṭa*) XIII.9.

respectively),[12] and a tripartite one (cf. tisro vācas ... in the *Ṛgveda*;[13] *ghoṣiṇī, jātanirghoṣā, nirghoṣā/aghoṣā* in the *Mahābhārata*).[14] In the *Vākya Padīya* and *Vṛtti* at least a hypothesis of a fourth level seems possible, as indicated by some ambiguous passages and, furthermore, by a consideration of the overall structure of the work.[15] The Śaiva tradition itself, in addition to a quadripartion which certainly is by far prevalent, shows, besides few marginal cases of a pentapartition,[16] at least an unequivocal case of tripartition in a highly respected text, such as the *Sārdhatriśati-Kālottara* (*vidyāpāda*, I.8):

> *sthūlaṃ śabda iti proktaṃ sūkṣmaṃ cintāmayaṃ bhavet |*
>
> *cintayā rahitaṃ yat tu tat paraṃ parikīrtitam |*
>
> The gross aspect [of *nāda*] is called 'sound', the subtle aspect is made of thought, the aspect that is devoid of thought is called 'supreme'.

For Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta, it is *Icchāśakti* that acts in *Paśyantī*, just as *Vaikharī* had been connected with *kriyāśakti* and *Madhyamā* with *Jñānaśakti*. But the power of Will also has the form of will to know. Therefore, *Paśyantī* is will but also *bodha*, knowledge.

This verse must have had a widespread renown if we even find it incorporated into a work of Tantric Buddhism, such as the *Adhyātmasādhana*, ascribed to Kambala (or perhaps we had rather say 'one' Kambala), quoted in the *Caryāgīti* etc. (cf. Lindtner 1985:115).[17] The Śaiva masters may not ignore it and are obliged to embark on various dialectical acrobatics to make it compatible with the prevailing doctrine of quadripartition. The first to tackle this issue was probably Utpaladeva himself in the *Ṭīkā*, as we shall see later.

But let us follow what Abhinavagupta says about *Paśyantī*, at least in outline (*ĪPVV* II pp.189ff). *Paśyantī* belongs to the plane where awareness is exempt from mental constructs (*vikalpa*), it is in itself without spatial-temporal differentiations, thus making indistinct the succession which, however, persists both in the signifier and the signified pertaining to the sphere of the perceiver subject and the perceived object respectively. Paśyantī embraces them within itself veiling them with its own nature. At this level the word consists of a sort of internal discourse, like a murmuring (*abhijalpa*), where words and sentences are so-to-speak 'condensed', reduced to a compact but not altogether formless state, somewhat like the verbal expression in the *sūtra* style.[18] The reference point of these observations is obviously the description of *Paśyantī* in the *Vākya Padīya* and *Vṛtti*; in particular, they are mostly to be seen as a long and rather intricate paraphrase of the half verse, not openly quoted, *avibhāgā tu paśyantī sarvataḥ saṃhṛtakramā* (included by Rau in the very body of the *Vākya Padīya* as I.167ab, whilst Iyer's edition puts it in the *Vṛtti*).[19] For Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta, it is *Icchāśakti* that acts in *Paśyantī*, just as *Vaikharī* had been connected with *kriyāśakti* and *Madhyamā* with *Jñānaśakti*.

12 Provided that such an interpretation may be acceptable. We know that the interpretations given in the *Nirukta* and the *Mahābhāṣya* follow different lines. *Nirukta (Pariśiṣṭa)* XIII.9 pp. 1173-4 proposes six different interpretations of *catvāri vāk parimitā ...*, ascribed to *ārṣam, vaiyākaraṇaḥ, yājñikāḥ, nairuktāḥ, 'eke'* (that is, *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* IV.1.3.15-16) and *ātmapravādāḥ* respectively; none of them refers to levels of the word. The verse is also quoted in the VP *Vṛtti*, which introduces it by explaining that "this threefold word [i.e. *paśyantī, madhyamā* and *vaikharī*] ... appears in human beings with a fourth [of itself]. In this fourth, only a certain part of it [i. e. the word] belongs to [ordinary] usage, whilst the rest trascends common usage". According to the further explanation given in Harivṛṣabha's *Paddhati* (p. 220), the word is fourfold on account of its division into noun, verbe [preverb and particle]; each of these differentiated forms is manifested to the common man only for one fourth [of itself], whereas the remaining three fourths are manifested to the sages only (this is also the explanation given in Kaiyaṭa's *Pradīpa*, vol. I p. 32). Patañjali's interpretation in the *Paspaśā* corresponds to that attributed by the *Nirukta* to the *vaiyākaraṇāḥ*, also echoed in the above passage from Harivṛṣabha's *Paddhati*. As regards *catvāri śṛṅgā ...*, *Nirukta (Pariśiṣṭa)* XIII.7 takes it as meaning the four Vedas (the passage as a whole is referred to the sacrifice); Patañjali, for his part, refers it again to the four parts of speech. According to Nāgeśa's *Uddyota*, Patañjali's gloss, because of the particle ca that it contains (*catvāri padajatāni nāmākhyātopasarganipātāś ca*, also occurring in the commentary on *catvāri vāk parimitā...*), lends itself to be taken as also referring to the fourfold division of the word principle: vol. I p. 31 *bhāṣye 'padajātāni' parāpaśyantimadhyamāvaikharīrūpāṇi | ata evāgre 'nipātāś ca' iti cakāraḥ saṅgacchate.*

13 VII. 101.1 *tisró vácaḥ pra vada jyótiragrā*; see also IX.97.34 *tisró váca īrayati prá váhnir ...*, commented on in *Nirukta (Pariśiṣṭa)* XIV.14.

14 'Endowed with sound, sounding', 'become (?) soundless', 'soundless'. The verse occurs in the VP (I.164) as *ghoṣiṇī jātanirghoṣā aghoṣā ca pravartate | tayor api ca ghoṣiṇyā nirghoṣaiva garīyasī ||* (according to Rau's edition); cf. *Mahābhārata* XIV.21.16, Pune Critical Edition, *ghoṣiṇī jātanirghoṣā nityam eva pravartate | tayor api ca ghoṣiṇyor nirghoṣaiva garīyasī ||*. This *śloka* has been transmitted with some *variae lectiones* of which the most significant is *ghoṣiṇyor* instead of *ghoṣiṇyā[ḥ]*. The choice between the two readings has a direct bearing on the very number of the planes of *vāc*. If we read *ghoṣiṇyā[ḥ]*, the planes are reduced to two only; this is the reading adopted by Harivṛṣabha's *Paddhati* p. 218, who is thus compelled to identify, on the one hand, *ghoṣiṇī-jāta*[or *jāti*]*nirghoṣā* with *vaikharī*, and *aghoṣā* or *nirghoṣa* with *madhyamā-paśyantī* taken together. On the contrary, Rāmakaṇṭha unequivocally quotes this verse as an example of tripartition in his commentaries on the *vidyāpādas* of the *Sārdhatriśati-kālottara* (on I.8, p. 15) and *Kiraṇa* (on III.23cd, p. 83; *āgamāntare 'pi tisro vācaḥ proktāḥ*).

15 Cf. Torella 2002:120-121 n.26, with references.

16 Cf. *Mahārthamañjarī-parimala* p. 124, which inserts *sūkṣmā vāc* between *paśyantī* and *parā*.

17 Evident traces of the *Kālottara* doctrine on *nāda* can be found in various later Śaiva scriptures, too, like the *Śivapurāṇa* (*Vāyusaṃhitā, pūrvakhaṇḍa*, XXIX. 4-5ab *śabdātmikā vibhūtir yā sā tridhā kathyate budhaiḥ | sthūlā sūkṣmā parā ceti sthūlā yā śrutigocarā || sūkṣmā cintāmayī proktā cintayā rahitā parā |*) or the South Indian *Pauṣkara* (*vidyāpāda* II.27cd-28ab *āgopālāṅganābālaṃ mlecchāḥ prākṛtabhāṣiṇaḥ || antarjalagatāḥ sattvāḥ nityaṃ jalpanti tā girāḥ |*, here referring not to the threefold *nāda* of the *Kālottara* but to the fourfold *vāc*; cf. *Sārdhatriśati-Kālottara, vidyāpāda* I.6cd-7ab).

18 See ĪPVV I p. 16 (cf. Torella 2002: XLII).

19 Abhinavagupta literally quotes a passage from the *Vṛtti*: ĪPVV II p. 189 *yathāha tatrabhavān 'pratisaṃhṛtakramā tu saty api bhede* [to be corrected to *apy abhede*] *samāviṣṭakramaśaktiḥ paśyantī' ity ādi.*

But the power of Will also has the form of will to know. Therefore, *Paśyantī* is will but also *bodha*, knowledge. It consists of an unobstructed light belonging to *Icchāśakti*. The power of Will, supporting the senses of knowledge, which are the product of the effusion of *Vidyāśakti*, gives rise to the perception devoid of *vikalpa*. In this manner, Abhinavagupta appropriates the description by the VP and translates it here mainly into terms of gnoseology. Thus, *Paśyantī* is the moment of the perception still exempt from discursive articulation (in this way, he can give a plausible explanation of its name, which is after all the present participle of *dṛś-*, and refer to *Paśyantī*'s nature as *Icchāśakti* - which keeps it away from any external deployment). At the same time, *Paśyantī* is the very first 'verbalization', still enclosed but potentially about to unfold. Without some kind of subtle verbalization knowledge would be impossible. The next level, *Madhyamā*, represents conceptualization, the articulation of the content of the first perception into fully differentiated and successive concepts and words. Lastly, *Vaikharī* is the moment of communication, the plane of the word externalized and made into audible sounds.

So *Paśyantī* is the state of *nirvikalpa*. I will dwell on the way this notion - which is more problematic than it may appear - should be taken in the later part of this paper. The scrutiny of the nature of *Paśyantī* is accompanied by the evaluation of the Grammarians' claim[20] that it constitutes the highest plane of the word. In *Paśyantī* - say Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta, closely following the *Vākya Padīya* and the *Vṛtti* but adapting them to their own context - somehow there is still succession (according to Abhinavagupta's formulation, there is succession both in the expressive component and in the expressed component, with the difference that in the former this is not evident, '*asphuṭa*', and in the latter it is *saṃvṛta* 'covered'). With this affirmation one has a twofold result: to make necessary, in the Śaiva outlook, a further plane where succession vanishes, and to create a link between *Paśyantī* and *Madhyamā* - or, in other words, critically addressing the Buddhist logicians, to fill the gap between the first moment of perception and determinate cognition. This gap would suffice to cause the whole fabric of the Śivādvaita - where all is equally penetrated by Śiva and from any plane one can have access to all the others - to collapse.

Let us examine the case of the first moment in the perception of a pond and the liquid contained in it (*saraḥ-rasaḥ*; *ĪPVV* II p. 191). Though this phase of perception may appear to be instantaneous and unitary, the reflective awareness that is associated with it cannot but grasp some form of succession in its object, otherwise in the subsequent moment of discursive thought (the plane of *Madhyamā*) we could not have the development of two distinct *vikalpas*. This is valid both in the case where *saraḥ* and *rasaḥ* are the object of an ordinary undifferentiated perception and in the case of the yogic experience named *nirvitarka-nirvicāra samādhi*. Even if one moves backwards as far as possible, that is, prior to the perception itself, to the very first experience of him who wishes to see, reach and express these two objects, some diversification must be there, too, or else the wish would simply be a useless undifferentiated wish which would lead to no definite object. Of course, the example chosen by Abhinavagupta (probably following the *Ṭīkā*) is not casual, being that which recurs in all the arguments against the doctrine which considers the phonemes as the meaning bearers. By using this example, Abhinavagupta here means to say that *Paśyantī* contains not only the embryo of the future articulation of knowledge but also that of its verbalization, and, somehow, even of the correct sequence of the phonemes in the signifier, which, subsequently, will give rise to the manifested and audible form of the word. Therefore there is no doubt that in Paśyantī there is some kind of succession, articulation of thought and reflection, in a word, *cintana*.

This assertion is not without some potential unwelcome consequences. Having arisen from the need to fill the gap between *Paśyantī* and *Madhyamā*, now it risks bringing them too close to each other and even confusing the two planes (the same term *cintana* is used for both of them). Moreover, it conflicts with the famous verse of the *Kālottara*, mentioned above, which on the one hand speaks of three levels and on the other considers the last level as 'devoid of thinking' (*cintayā rahitam*). In order to show that Śiva, the author of the *Kālottara* (here called *Kālapādasaṃhitā*), in fact intended to affirm a quadripartition - as the Śaiva philosophy deems necessary - there are only two ways: either to eliminate an element from the ideal quadripartition or to add one to the literal tripartition found in the revealed text. Utpaladeva in the *Ṭīkā* chooses the former alternative, because what most matters to him is, first, to underline the presence of a germ of discursive articulation in *Paśyantī* (for the gnoseological reasons mentioned above) and, secondly, to find in this important text an explicit support for the existence of a plane beyond *Paśyantī*

20 To be more precise, Abhinavagupta speaks of the 'old grammarians' (*ibid.* p. 191 *jaradvaiyākaraṇāḥ*).

(higher than the others, but not in terms of verticality). Very ingenuously he solves the difficulty by excluding *Vaikharī*. The first level (*sthūla*), named *śabda*, stands for *Madhyamā*. In it, *śabda* is present with all evidence and succession; however, it is not *śabda* as 'sound', but as 'signifier' (*vācaka*). Sound, says Abhinavagupta (*ibid.* p. 192), being a *svalakṣaṇa*, cannot be the signifier since the soul of the signifier-signified relationship is the superimposition 'this is that' and a *svalakṣaṇa* cannot be superimposed on another *svalakṣaṇa*. The form of the jar as an object of mental construct is not different from the form of the jar as an external object. The 'manifestation' (*ābhāsa*) 'jar' is the same, it is only that in the latter case it is combined with other 'manifestations' thus forming a certain *svalakṣaṇa* (cf. Torella 2002: 89-90, n. 3) Thus, by applying his *ābhāsa* theory, Utpaladeva solves the question in these terms: The first plane (*sthūla*) has been called '*śabda*' because it contains *śabda* endowed with all its essential, structural characteristics, as 'signifier' (*vācaka*). The plane of the articulated and audible word has simply been ignored by the *Kālottara* inasmuch as what is its essential core (the *vācaka* component), that is the *śabda* proper, has already been mentioned and all the other elements that characterize the ordinary human language (like audibility and so on) are to be considered, in comparison with it, only negligible epiphenomena. Very different is the interpretation by Rāmakaṇṭha in his *Kālottaravṛtti* and *Kiraṇavṛtti*, for which a separate study would be needed on account both of the difference in the viewpoint and the unsatisfactory state of the transmitted texts.

Thus, *vāc* has been presented as object, knowledge and sense. Anyhow, each of them is only a condition, limited in itself and dependent on the two others, and in a sense, even if hierarchically ordered, they basically belong to a single dimension. It is necessary to posit another reality, totally beyond this distinction of planes and, at the same time, constituting the deepest identity of each of them.

Then, what is in short the peculiar nature of *Madhyamā* with respect to *Paśyantī*? *Madhyamā* is the plane of mental construct (*ĪPVV* II p. 192 *madhyamaiva vikalpabhūmir ucyate*). Further developing an analogy already outlined, Abhinavagupta (*ibid.* p. 196) says that the māyic phonemes which form the articulated language may be compared to the external objects, like the jar. The knowledge that causes these phonemes to arise, in its *nirvikalpa* and *savikalpa* aspects, is precisely that belonging to the planes of *Paśyantī* and *Madhyamā* (homologous to it is the knowledge, differentiated into direct perception and mental construct, which causes the objects to arise, that is, to become manifest). This externalization process is achieved when the word, this time as a sense of action, makes the nature of the phonemes totally explicit placing them on the māyā plane, just as the other senses of action (hands and so on) do with regard to external objects.

Thus, *vāc* has been presented as object, knowledge and sense. Anyhow, each of them is only a condition, limited in itself and dependent on the two others, and in a sense, even if hierarchically ordered, they basically belong to a single dimension. It is necessary to posit another reality, totally beyond this distinction of planes and, at the same time, constituting the deepest identity of each of them. To put it in Śaiva terms, remaining within Abhinavagupta-Utpaladeva's discourse, a reality which coincides with no single plane, but from where the planes derive the capacity of performing their respective functions; which cannot be measured on the basis of a greater or lesser presence of contraction (*saṃkoca*, in the sense of 'limitation, individualization') but which embodies the very will presiding over this free appearing of contraction in the various grades. It is precisely in this absence of contraction that the essential character of the fourth level postulated by the Śaivas lies. This is described as basically different from the three others (*tisṛbhyo 'pi vilakṣaṇā iyam*) by Abhinavagupta (*ibid.* p. 189), who points out that Utpaladeva too had separated it from the others by the word *punaḥ*. The *Paśyantī* of the Grammarians may not aspire to such a role. In it, the 'vision' is contracted by the spatial-temporal conditioning caused by its objects. Fullness, on the contrary, means being above space and time. In the sequel, Abhinavagupta puts forward a few relevant objections to his own position. The main one is this: If *Paśyantī* is the plane of experience devoid of mental constructs, the object once it has entered it should be free from its own 'heaviness' and therefore incapable of performing this limiting action with respect to consciousness.[21] Utpaladeva meant to express the same thing in the *ĪPK* (III.2.3ab) and *Vṛtti* thereon when he said that to the subject in the condition of 'Lord' the

21 *Ibid.* p. 194 *galitasaṃcokanatvāt kathamiva tāṃ paśyantīṃ saṃkocayet ity āśaṅkhya* [...].

world constituted so-to-speak his very body. However, Abhinavagupta has in mind here another definite formulation by Utpaladeva in the *Ṭīkā* on verse I.1.2 which probably at this point Utpaladeva himself referred to : *ĪPVV* II p. 195 *tasyāṃ hi dāśāyām aiśvaro bhāvo paśor api* "In this [māyic] condition the state of 'Lord' can take place even for the limited subject". It is true, says Abhinavagupta later, that the condition of 'Lord' arises whenever the knowable object flows back into the knower (*ibid. vedyasya vedakabhāganimagnatvam eva tad aiśvaryam uktam*). This continuously happens in ordinary experience, where there are many small *Paśyantīs* which in turn may be absorbed into progressively greater *Paśyantīs*, like for instance the intention or the action of going out of the house with respect to the wider 'I am going to the village'. Here Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta are evidently influenced by Bhartṛhari's hierarchy of universals (originally a Vaiśeṣika doctrine) and his conception of action. With respect to all these more or less limited *Paśyantīs* the plane of Sadāśiva-Īśvara represents the highest achievement, the archetype of *Paśyantī*, as it were. In its individual realizations this state of non-discursive knowledge comes to be limited, contracted as regards its potentially infinite expansion both by the nature of the subject (who identifies with a particular body, thinks of himself as distinct from the other subjects etc.) and by that of the object (with analogous considerations).

It is undeniable that Bhartṛhari expressly mentions only three levels, the very fact that the second is termed *Madhyamā* confirms this number. Abhinavagupta and Utpaladeva, however, might have considered that just as for them of the four levels only three are homogeneous, the same might have been true of Bhartṛhari.

A full achievement of this experience is only possible when any identification of the I with limited planes ceases, the latent impregnations left by previous identifications vanish and, in the end, the body dies. But even this experience cannot claim to belong to the plane of *Parā* until it is expanded into the universal absolute. *Parā Vāc*, says Abhinavagupta, is the majesty of bliss whose essence is freedom, disclosed by *Paśyantī* in the highest form (*ibid.* p. 197 *yāsau mahāpaśyantīnāṃ pratyagātmarūpāṇām avibhāgātmikā paramamahāpaśyantī tayā ca yo 'sāv ānandamahimā parasvātantryātmā ullāsanīyaḥ, sā bhagavataḥ parā vāg iti darśitam*). In this connection, one is reminded of the passage in the *Vākya Padīya Vṛtti* where the description of *Paśyantī* is followed by an enigmatic hint at a *paraṃ paśyantīrūpam*, which one is tempted to take as a fourth level of *vāc* asserted by Bhartṛhari himself.[22] The criticism of Bhartṛhari is centred on this point alone, which is repeatedly taken up again and examined from different angles : "How is it possible to consider the plane of *Paśyantī*, where there is still succession and contraction, as the supreme plane?" Abhinavagupta and Utpaladeva make use of Somānanda's criticism only as regards this point, but they do it by totally changing the tone. Bhartṛhari is no longer fiercely attacked, but on the contrary he even turns out to be the reference point for the whole description of the levels, including *Paśyantī*. The final considerations on p. 195, though leaving the basic criticism unchanged, may almost sound like the attempt at reconciliation: If Grammarians do not acknowledge the word as the agent of an activity that brings about reflective awareness itself, consisting in the universal mantra *AHAṂ*, if, in other words, they do not see it as *śabdana* but merely as *śabda*, that means that for them the word is only a poor instrument of action, even poorer than an instrument of knowledge [but, Abhinavagupta continues implicitly, those who have built all this fabric on *vāc* and call it 'supreme' cannot possibly think so, and seeing that they start from our premises they cannot but come to our own conclusions].[23] It is undeniable that Bhartṛhari expressly mentions only three levels, the very fact that the second is termed *Madhyamā* confirms this number. Abhinavagupta and Utpaladeva, however, might have considered that just as for them of the four levels only three are homogeneous,[24] the same might have been true of Bhartṛhari, who would have simply excluded from the description the one which represented the all-encompassing and absolutely undifferentiated reality of the word-principle, namely the *śabdatattva* mentioned in the opening verse of the *VP*. This possible interpretation must have been in the air, if at least one of the early Kāśmīrian philosophers, Rāmakaṇṭha,

22 VP *Vṛtti* I, p. 216 *paraṃ tu paśyantīrūpam anapabhraṃśam asaṃkīrṇaṃ lokavyavahārātītam.*

23 *vāṅ nāma vaktīty anena vapuṣā yadi śuddhakartṛtāprāṇā aham ity asaṃkucitamahamantramayī śabdanarūpā na upagamyate vaiyākaraṇais tadā karaṇarūpā sā buddhīndriyavargād api nikṛṣṭā karmendriyasvabhāvā paśuprāṇibhis tiryagādibhiḥ sādhāraṇā dhvanijanikā ahaṃkāravṛttir eva kācit vākpāṇyādivat, tatra ca kathaṃ paratvaṃ bhaved iti.*

24 Cf. the passage already quoted: *tisṛbhyo 'pi vilakṣaṇā iyam.*

Utpaladeva's direct disciple, openly adopted it when in the *Spandavivṛti*[25] he identified Bhartṛhari's *śabdatattva* with the *Parā Vāc* of the Śaivas.[26] Others, like Kṣemarāja in the *Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya*, just as explicitly will continue to see in Bhartṛhari the upholder of the tripartition.[27] It is however very significant that from Utpaladeva onwards the esteem in which Bhartṛhari was held by the Kāśmīrian authors become very high and even the possible disagreement about the number of the levels of *vāc* was not able to undermine it any more. The controversial issue whether Bhartṛhari did advocate a fourth level, on the basis of various indications (the mention of a *parā prakṛtiḥ*, apparently beyond *Paśyantī*; his speaking of *śabdabrahman* according to *vidyā* and *avidyā*, the fact that the verse stating the tripartition avowedly only regards what falls within the scope of grammar, etc.), cannot be treated on the present occasion.

I am going to conclude this paper by taking up once again a point already touched upon above, but which Abhinavagupta and Utpaladeva must have considered as crucial if they felt the need to treat it again separately in all its implications. I am referring to the presence of the word even in a cognition devoid of mental constructs. In all the long treatment in the *ĪPVV* (II pp. 219-240), of which I will take into account here only some of the most significant aspects, the reference point is Bhartṛhari, now definitely assumed as a master and ally, while the main opponent is Dharmakīrti. Dharmakīrti's doctrines are weighed with great attention and respect, and in spite of the different presuppositions they nourish and enrich Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta's thought, which thanks to them progressively clarifies and deepens until it reaches its most satisfactory formulation. The commentary, more than twenty pages in length, refers to verse 1.5.19:

> *sākṣātkārakṣaṇe py asti vimarśaḥ katham anyathā |*
>
> *dhāvanādy upapadyeta pratisandhānavarjitam ||*
>
> "Even at the moment of direct perception there is a reflective awareness. How otherwise could one account for such actions as running and so on, if they were thought of as being devoid of determinate awareness?" (Transl. Torella 2002:125).

Even at the first moment of direct experience, as well as in the most rapid and immediate action, there should be room for some form of intentionality, of will, and consequently of reflective awareness without which will would be directionless. Reflective awareness inevitably goes together with, and is even realized through, an inner verbalization. Abhinavagupta and certainly prior to him Utpaladeva seem to take as a critical reference point two well-known passages of the *Pramāṇavārttika* (*PV*), on which all the argumentation in the *ĪPVV* gravitates. In the one (*PV* III.124-125,[28] belonging to the section defining the characteristics of *pratyakṣa*, which Abhinavagupta takes into consideration as a whole), Dharmakīrti proposes to demonstrate that kalpanā is absent in sensation; in the other (III.174-191ab), of which Abhinavagupta repeatedly quotes the first *pāda* (*saṅketasmaraṇopāyam...*), he denies sensation any association with the word. On the other hand, we know that the association with the word, or, more generally, with verbal expression (*abhilāpasaṃsarga, śabdayojanā*) is precisely the chief characteristic of *kalpanā*.[29] Incidentally, on a bit closer examination, it comes out that all the *PV* verses cited here also occur in the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (*PVin*). Furthermore, we can find scattered here and there in Abhinava's commentary some short prose passages, unnoticed by the editor, which definitely belong to the *PVin*, and two times the very mention '*viniścaya*'. The use of the *PVin* as one of the main sources for Buddhist philosophy is not a peculiarity of Abhinavagupta. In this case too, he has been preceded by Utpaladeva, as shown beyond doubt by extant passages from his *Ṭīkā* containing two prose quotations from the *PVin*.[30] The extensive use of the *PVin* made by other authors, too, such as Jayanta and, particularly, Bhāsarvajña, can tell us much about the fortune and diffusion of this text in medieval Kashmir.

Abhinavagupta says that he is mostly in agreement on the

25 Cf. p. 153 *tathā ca śabdādvayavāde sāmānyena śabdārthobhayarūpo 'paryantāvantarabhedo yo 'yam īśvarasya śaktiprasaraḥ, taṃ vivartavācoyuktyā vyavaharati sma | yad āha* [cit. VP I.115 and I.1] *iti | atra brahmaparyāyaśabdatattvatayā pārameśvaram eva rūpaṃ nirdiṣṭam | tat - iyaṃ parā śaktir eva ...*

26 It is worth noting that the early Śaiva authors when arguing in favour of the quadripartition of the word do not resort to textual authorities belonging to their own tradition, but mostly confine themselves to referring to the texts quoted in the VP *Vṛtti*. There is, to my knowledge, at least an early Śaiva tantra that might contain a hint to the quadripartition. I am referring to a passage from the *Tantrasadbhava*, quoted by Kṣemarāja in *Śivasūtravimarśinī* p. 27: *hṛtsthā ekāṇavā proktā kaṇṭhe proktā dvirāṇavā* [the *Śivasūtravimarśinī* reads, incorrectly, *dvitīyakā*] / *trirāṇavā tu jñātavyā jihvāmule sada śrita // jihvāgre vamaniṣpattiḥ śabdavyāptaṃ carācaram /* (National Archives, Kathmandu, ms. A/363 f.12b).

27 *Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya* p. 18, *śabdabrahmamayaṃ paśyantīrūpam ātmatattvam - iti vaiyākaraṇāḥ śrīsadāśivapadam adhyāsitāḥ*.

28 [PV III=*Pratyakṣapariccheda*] *saṃhṛtya sarvataś cintāṃ stimitenāntarātmanā | sthito 'pi cakṣuṣā rūpam ikṣate sākṣajā matiḥ || punar vikalpayan kiñcid āsīn me kalpanedṛsi | vetti ceti na pūrvoktāvasthāyām indriyad gatau ||*.

29 Cf. PVin. I.4bc [...] *abhilāpini | pratītiḥ kalpanā* (see also *Tattvasaṃgraha* 1213); *Nyāyabindu* I.5 *abhilāpasaṃsargayogyapratibhāsā pratītiḥ kalpanā*, also deriving from the above passage of the PVin (cf. Funayama 1992: 61, fn. 43).

30 The first passage (corresponding to PVin I, pp. 24-25), not recognized as being from the *Ṭīkā*, occurs in a footnote of the Kashmir Series edition of Abhinava's *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī* (vol. I, p. 101, fn. 17; see also Stern 1991:158, note 55) which records the annotations found in the margins of one of the MSS used for that edition. For the second passage (corresponding to PVin I, p. 41) see Torella 2007d: 928, n. 8.

first point, but Dharmakīrti's argument holds good for denying mental construction (*kalpanā*), not *parāmarśa*.[31] Without some form of *parāmarśa*, that is, a conscious appropriation by awareness, neither the cognition of the self's state of stillness (*staimitya*), nor consequently its memory could take place, nor could we talk here about it. The essential core of Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta's discourse lies precisely in this : to distinguish in the one case *kalpanā* from *parāmarśa* (and its synonyms) and, in the other, *abhilāpa* from *abhijalpa*. The former represent so-to-speak the dilution of the latter, their debased, entirely māyic version.[32] Buddhist criticism of the former, which seems altogether acceptable to the Kashmiri masters, indirectly guides them in a sound formulation of the latter. A basic objection by the Buddhists is this: There may not be the word in perception, since the word does not belong to the own form of the object being perceived. A cognition arising from the very force of one thing cannot illuminate another, that is, from a visual sensation a word cannot appear nor can the word arouse a visual sensation.[33] Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta's reply moves along two lines. First, it is obvious that *śabda* as 'sound' cannot become manifest when the sensation is aroused by a jar, but the word at issue here is not a *svalakṣaṇa* 'sound' but a *sāmānya*[34] (*ibid.* p. 235), it is an expressive element or, to be more precise, 'a potentiality of signification' (*śabdanaśakti*); therefore, one cannot even hypothesize that its cognition may directly derive from a thing (to sum up: the responsible for the arising of the word in sensation can be neither the object nor the sensorial faculty). Secondly, the Buddhist logicians, too, do not make *śabdayojanā* 'association with words' derive from the object. Then, where do the Śaivas think this verbalization in perception arises from? Their reply is rather complex and is nourished by Buddhist ideas. For a visual perception to occur various factors are needed: the object must be in a convenient location, sight must be good, there must be enough light, but what may not be lacking in any kind of cognition is a so-to-speak less 'instrumental' factor: the mind's attention (*manaskāra, avadhāna*). If the form etc. is what gives sensation a content, it is *manaskāra* that causes the very arising of a cognitive light in sensation (*ibid.* p. 335 *saviṣayatā tāvat nīlena kṛtā, manaskāreṇa bodhatā*). Therefore, it is in the *manaskāra* that the way in which *śabdanaśakti* arises is to be sought. The potential verbal signification, made possible by the combining of reflective awareness with a word not particularized and not articulated into phonemes as yet, like a nod, is awakened by the object but only insofar as this object is supported by a particular *saṃskāra*, an impulse towards verbal signification (*śabdabhāvanā*) spontaneously deposited in the *manaskāra* from time immemorial.[35] This solution is modelled on the way the Buddhists account for pleasure or pain accompanying a sensation. The object alone does not suffice to account for pleasure.[36] This is aroused by the relation with pleasures connected with previous objects of the same kind which left their latent impression in the mind; these pleasures are awakened at the moment of perception. Thus, it is admissibile to speak, even at the first moment of perception, not indeed of an explicit *abhilāpayojanā* for which the conditions required by the Buddhists would indeed be necessary (a sequence of operations is indicated in PV III.174-5: apprehension of the conventions, traces left by them, arousing of their recollection, application)[37], but of an inner discourse (*antaḥsaṃjalpa*)[38] only acting at the 'signifier' level and appearing in the form of an indistinct verbalization - a 'murmur' (*abhijalpātmatvena*) - and not as

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31 ĪPVV II p. 229 *satyam uktam, tat tu na parāmarśābhāvasādhanāya alam.*

32 On the opposition between *abhilāpa* (lit. 'talk' 'verbal expression') and *abhijalpa* ('murmur') see below note 39.

33 *Ibid.* p. 234 *indriyabalāc ca utpannaṃ vijñānam, na ca cākṣuṣeṇa jñānena śabdasya pratibhāso yuktaḥ. The reference point is a passage from* PVin I p. 7 (cf. Vetter 1966: 40 note 1), partially quoted on the same page: *na hi sendriyajñāne sambhavati | arthasya sāmarthyena samudbhavāt* [kār. 4d] | *tad dhy arthasāmarthyenotpadyamānaṃ tadrūpam evānukuryāt.*

34 *Ibid.* p. 235 *vācako hi ayaṃ śabdo, na ca svalakṣaṇasya niyatākṣagamyasya viṣayasya sato vācakatvam [...] kas tarhi asau | ucyate 'sāmānya' iti.* But this is also the Buddhist position; see *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā* I p. 449 *abhilāpaḥ - vācakaḥ śabdaḥ, sa ca sāmānyākāraḥ* (cf. Funayama 1992: 63-64, n.50).

35 Cf. *ibid.* p. 236 *apratiniyataśabdamelanaparighaṭitaśabdanātmakavimarśaviśeṣaprabodhe saṃketagrahaṇapaṭīyaḥ svābitamanaskārasahitaḥ so 'rthaḥ vyāpriyate, na śuddhaḥ.*

36 Cf. PVin I, p. 23, śl. 23d *nārtharūpāḥ sukhādayaḥ* (see also Stern 1991:158).

37 Cf. ĪPVV II pp. 223-224 *vimarśanaṃ śabdayojanayā, sā ca saṃketasmaraṇataḥ, tad api saṃskāraprabodhāt, so 'pi tādṛśadṛśaḥ [...].*

38 Cf. Helarāja's comments on VP III.3.32 (p. 145): *tathā hi buddho* [read: *buddhau*] *śabdarthayoḥ pūrvam abhedenāvasthānam | na hi vivakṣito 'rthaḥ śabdasambhedaśūnyaḥ, antaḥsaṃjalparūpasya tasya pratibhāsanāt.*

an object (*na tu viṣayarūpatayā*).[39] This is brought about by the *manaskāra* as 'most immediate cause' (*samanantarapratyaya*). This function, undeniable because it is established through inner awareness, consists of 'verbalization, description, indication'; it takes place in the subject at the moment of perception and is distinct from it.[40] The form of verbalization, described above as aroused by the object, is obviously only the form pertaining to the māyic world. On the contrary, it is senseless to talk of a cause as regards what is beyond māyā and consists in the permanently present and active Self.

In conclusion, a question emerges spontaneously (in our minds as well as in the Buddhist opponent's). Then, what precisely is the *nirvikalpa* state for the Śaivas; or rather, does it really exist ? At this point, we already know the reply, at least in part.[41] All the cognitive activity of the māyic subject contracted by the so-called 'cuirasses'[42] has as its essence Impure Science (*aśuddhavidyā*), which is not independent but is a power of Parameśvara. The single cognitive acts, though only partially, manifest - or, in a sense, resurrect - the light that the contracting power of māyā had dispelled, and - the core of any light/knowledge being the reflective awareness 'I' - when something suddenly becomes the object of knowledge and thus flows into the *vimarśa* 'I', it cannot be indicated as 'this' any longer. In other words, it is not the object of *vikalpa*, since this activity, which causes the separation between subject and object to arise, does not emerge. Objectivity (*idantā*), in this case, is not altogether absent but unexpressed, not full; the māyic subject, for his part, is so-to-speak 'enclosed', 'covered' (*saṃvṛta*). When the *vikalpa* arises again, the māyic subject, as a consequence, 'opens' (*apāvṛta*); the object, the 'this' (*idam*), emerges again. In comparison with the latter state, the former takes the name of *nirvikalpa*.[43] The *śabdabhāvanā*, the spontaneous impulse to verbalization, still subsists within the *nirvikalpa* state, but in an enclosed and contracted form, which contrasts with the diffused and expanded *śabdabhāvanā* of the *savikalpa* state.[44] Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta's endebtment to Bhartṛhari (with his conception of a *saṃhṛtarūpā śabdabhāvanā*)[45] is quite evident.

A last possible objection (ibid. p. 240): So, *vikalpa* means for the Śaivas to indicate an object as 'this', but the *vikalpa* does not grasp the real. Therefore, with respect to a perceived object we should not have the reflective awareness 'this' but only 'I'. As a consequence, there could be neither communication nor worldy transactions for they presuppose a different form of awareness: 'I am perceiving this object which is being perceived'. Thus all everyday life would collapse. But the opponent has forgotten that, unlike the Buddhists, the Śaivas do not consider the *vikalpa* as having as its object the unreal (*avastuviṣaya*). In the universe penetrated by Śiva there is no room for absolute non-being, nor consequently for absolute error.

39 Cf. ibid. p. 238 *āntarasya vācakarūpasya abhijalpātmatvena, na tu viṣayarūpatayā, abhilāpasya yojanā yuktaiva prathamadarśanalakṣaṇe 'pi bodhe, na tu abhilāpayojanā.* However, according to the Buddhists, too, *abhilāpa* does not seem to correspond to the actual word as fully articulated but rather to its *vācaka* aspect (cf. *Nyāyabinduṭikā* p. 47 *abhilāpyate 'neneti abhilāpo vācakaḥ śabdaḥ* ; see also above note 32). Anyhow, the *abhijalpa* of the Śaivas is to be seen as a 'subtler' version of the Buddhists' *abhilāpa.* The concept of *abhijalpa* is, once again, to be traced back to Bhartṛhari. One of the possible definitions of the word meaning, given in the second chapter of the VP (vv. 119ff.), is precisely *abhijalpa* (vv.127cd-128). In it, we have the word and its meaning still forming a unity, in which however the word encloses, i.e. predominates over, the expressed object (Puṇyarāja on v.128: so *'yam ity abhisambandho 'dhyāsākhya ucyate | padārthasvarūpam ācchāditam ekīkṛtam iva pratyāyyate.* Still clearer on this point is Kamalaśīla, when commenting on the same verse quoted in the *Tattvasaṃgraha* (I, p. 351): *śabda evārtha ity evaṃ śabde 'rthasya niveśanaṃ so 'yam ity abhisambandhaḥ, tasmāt kāraṇād yat śabdasyārthena sahaikīkṛtaṃ rūpaṃ bhavati taṃ svīkṛtārthākāraṃ śabdam abhijalpyam* [read: abhijalpam] *ity āhuḥ.*

40 *Ibid. saṃskṛtaṃ yat svopādānaṃ samanantarapratyayarūpaṃ manaskārākhyaṃ tena upapāditaḥ svasaṃvedanasiddhatvād anapahnavanīyaḥ śabdanaṃ nirūpaṇaṃ nirdeśanam iti prasiddho yaḥ pramātur draṣṭur darśanātirikto vyāparas tadāśrayā [...].*

41 See *ibid.* pp. 239-240.

42 On the docrine of the cuirasses (*kañcuka*) see Torella 1998.

43 *Ibid.* p. 240 *udite tu vikalpanavyāpāre so 'pāvṛto vartate iti tatkṛtāt dvaitārambhāt pramātṛprameyayor bhedakaḥ prameyaviśrāntaḥ idam iti nirdeśo bhavan pūrvāpekṣayā prasāritarūpaḥ svayaṃ vikalpanātmā svāpekṣayā purvatra nirvikalpakatāṃ vyavahārayati.*

44 *Ibid. saṃvṛtā hi śabdabhāvanā prasāritāṃ śabdabhāvanāṃ vividhakalpanārūpāṃ apekṣya tathābhūtavaividhyakalpanāvaikalyāt nirvikalpety ucyate.*

45 VP *Vṛtti* I p.188; see Torella 2002: 125-126, n. 42.

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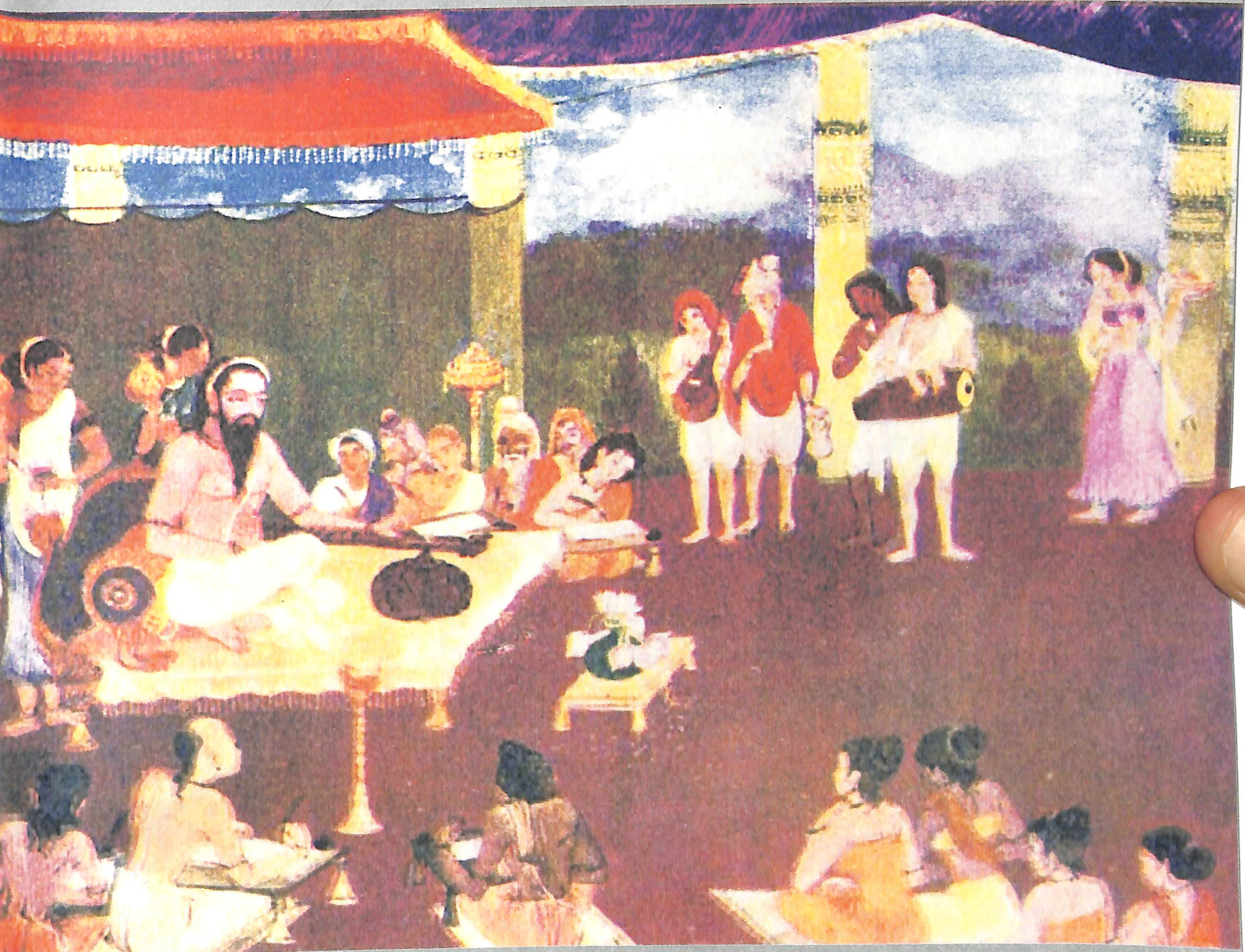
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Visual Essay

Abhinavagupta Drishyāvalī



Abhinavagupta among his disciples – a painting by Asit Kumar Haldar based on the description attributed to Madhurja Yogin, a disciple of Abhinavagupta.

Madhurāja Yogin, a learned scholar and a yoga adept, was a very devoted disciple of Abhinavagupta. He was a very well read person with particular interest in works of non-dualist Shaivism of Kashmir, a philosophical system which he helped propagate in other parts of the country including Madurai, where he lived. He composed several works in Sanskrit verse and prose to express his views on intricate metaphysical issues, even as he lived the austere life of a Shaiva ascetic. So greatly was Madhurāja impressed by Abhinavagupta's thought and his spiritual attainments that even though seventy-four years old at the time, he came all the way from Madurai to Kashmir to see him. There is every possibility that Madhurāja Yogin had personally witnessed the great congregation of spiritualists in which Abhinavagupta was recognised as the spiritual head of all Shaiva sects, an event he describes in his work the *Gurunāthaparāmarśa*. In the *Dhyānaśloka*, a set of four verses written by him, he has drawn a beautiful pen-picture of the great Shaiva Master. This pen-picture is so vivid and complete in details that guided by it an artist, Asit Kumar Haldar of the Bengal School, has been able to reflect it in paint. The original *śloka*s in Sanskrit and their translation in English are as follows:

द्राक्षारामस्य मध्ये स्फटिकमणिमये मण्डपे चित्ररम्ये, पुष्पस्रग्धूपदीपैर्वहलपरिमले चर्चिते चन्दनाद्यैः।
वाद्यैर्गीतः सनृत्यैः सततमुखरिते योगिनीसिद्धसंघै–राकीर्णे स्वर्गपीठे मृदुतलिमतले बद्धमुक्तावितान।।1।।

आसीनः क्षेमराजप्रभृतिभिरखिलैः सेवितः शिष्यवर्गैः, पादोपान्ते निषण्णैरवहितहृदयैरुक्तं लिखद्भिः।
द्वाभ्यां पार्श्वस्थिताभ्यां शिवरसकरकं पूर्णताम्बूलपेटीं, दूतीभ्यां विभ्रतीभ्यामपरकरलसन्मातुलिङ्गोत्पलाभ्याम्।।2।।

आनन्दान्दोलिताक्षः स्फुटकृततिलको भस्मना भालमध्ये, रुद्राक्षोल्लसकर्णः कलितकचभरो मालया लम्बकूर्चः।
रक्ताङ्गो यक्षपङ्कोल्लसदसितगलो लम्बमुक्तोपवीतः, क्षौमं वासो वसानः शशिकरधवलं वीरयोगासनस्थः।।3।।

जन्वासक्तैकहस्तः स्फुटपरमशिवज्ञानमुद्राक्षसूत्रो, वामश्रीपाणिपद्मस्फुरितनखमुखैर्वादयन्नदवीणाम्।
श्रीकण्ठेशावतारः परमकरुणया प्राप्तकश्मीरदेशः, श्रीमान्नः पातु साक्षादभिनववपुषा दक्षिणामूर्तिदेवः।।4।।

A pen - portrait of Abhinavagupta by Madhuraja Yogin
Abhinavaguptapādācrya teaching

"May glorious god Dakṣiṇmūrti in the form of Abhinava, who is an incarnation of Śrīkaṇṭha and has come to Kashmir out of deep compassion, protect us. His eyes are rolling with spiritual bliss. The center of his forehead is clearly marked with three lines, made with ashes. His ears look beautiful with *rudrākṣa*. His luxuriant hair is tied with a garland of flowers. His beard is long. His body is rosy. His neck, black because of its being besmeared with paste of camphor, musk, sandal, saffron etc., looks splendid. His long sacred thread (*yajñopavīta*) is left loose. He is dressed in silk-cloth, white like the rays of the moon, and is sitting in the Yogic posture, called *vīra*, on a soft cushion over a throne of gold with a canopy, decked with strings of pearls, in an open hall - full of crystals, beautified with paintings, smelling extremely sweet on account of garlands of flowers, incense and lamps, perfumed with sandal etc., constantly resonant with vocal and instrumental music and dance and crowded with female ascetics and saints of recognized spiritual power, - in the center of a garden of grapes. He is attended by all his pupils, such as Kṣemarāja, who are sitting, with their minds concentrated, at his feet and are writing down all that he says, and by two female messengers (*dūtīs*), who are standing by his side, each with a jar, full of water, distilled from the grain kept soaked in water for three nights, and a box, full of betel, in the right hand and a fruit of citron and a lotus in the left. His right hand, wearing the rosary of - *rudrākṣa*, is resting on the thigh and his fingers are in the position indicative of the grasp of the Ultimate Reality. And he is playing upon the *vīṇā*, which is capable of producing original musical sound (*nāda*), with the tip of nail of his lotus-like left hand."

Source: K. C.Pandey,
Abhinavagupta: A Historical and Philosophical Study

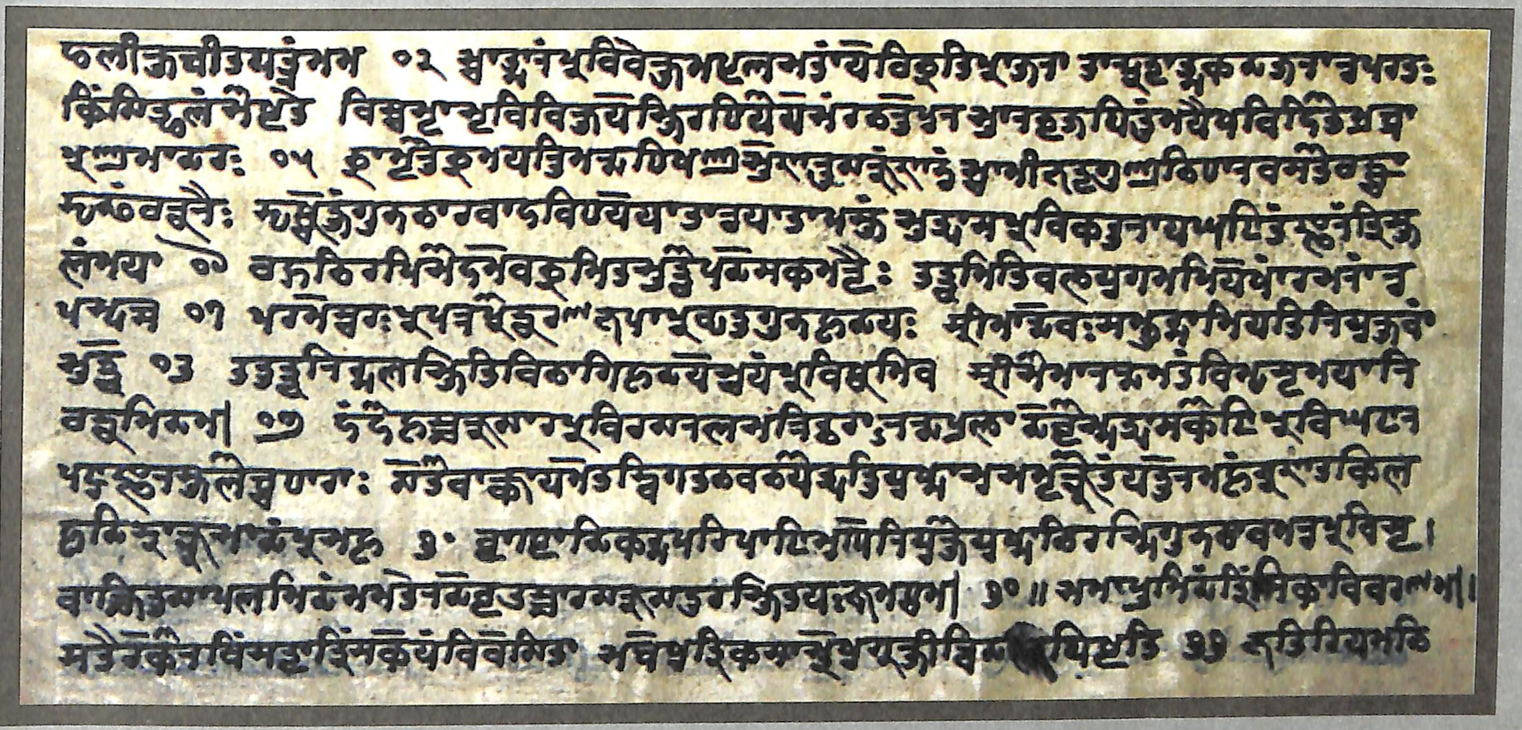
अभिनवगुप्तनाथलिखितं लिखितं हृदये, तदितर शास्त्रकार लिखितं लिखितं सलिले

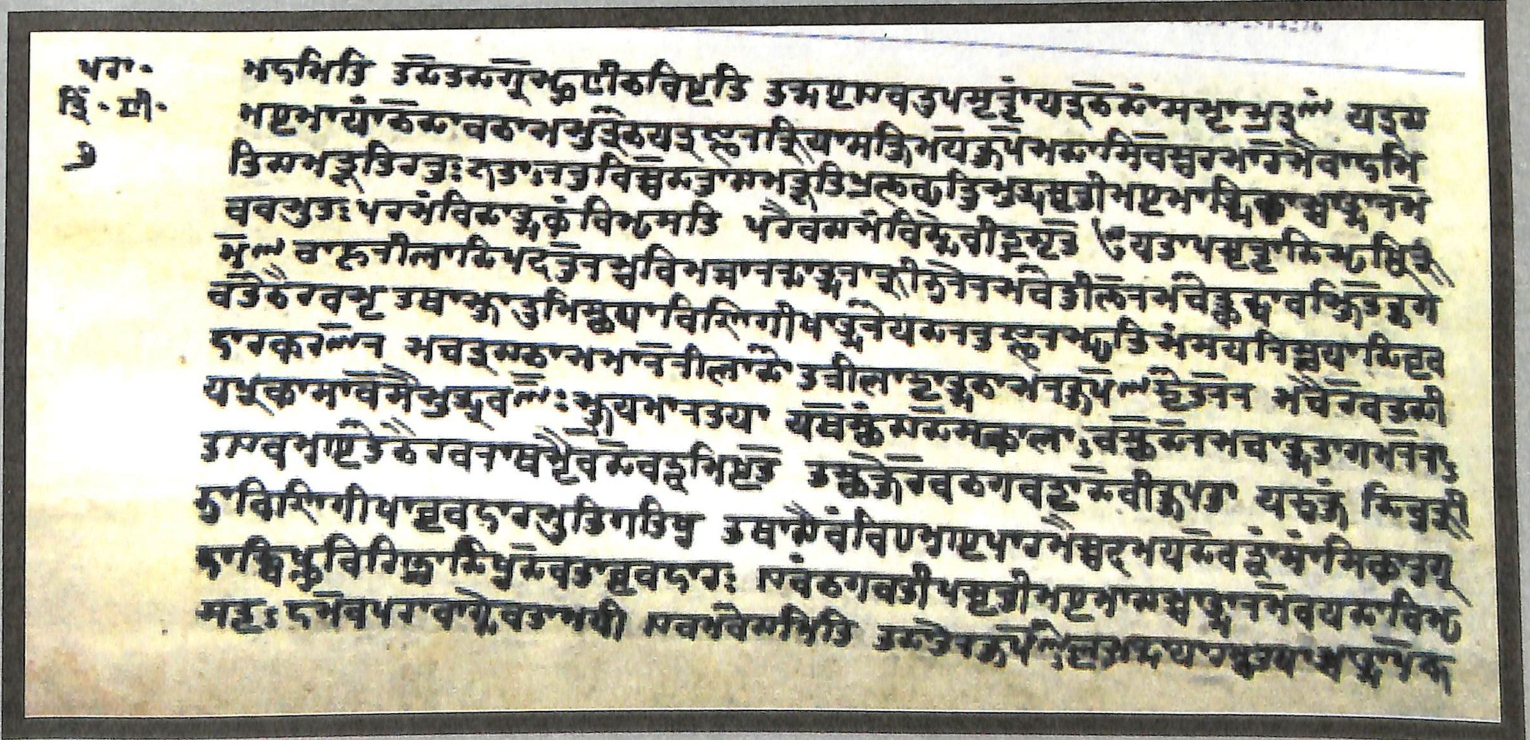
(मधुराज योगी)

Whatever Abhinavagupta has written is written on the heart.
Whatever other authors of texts have written is (as if) written on water

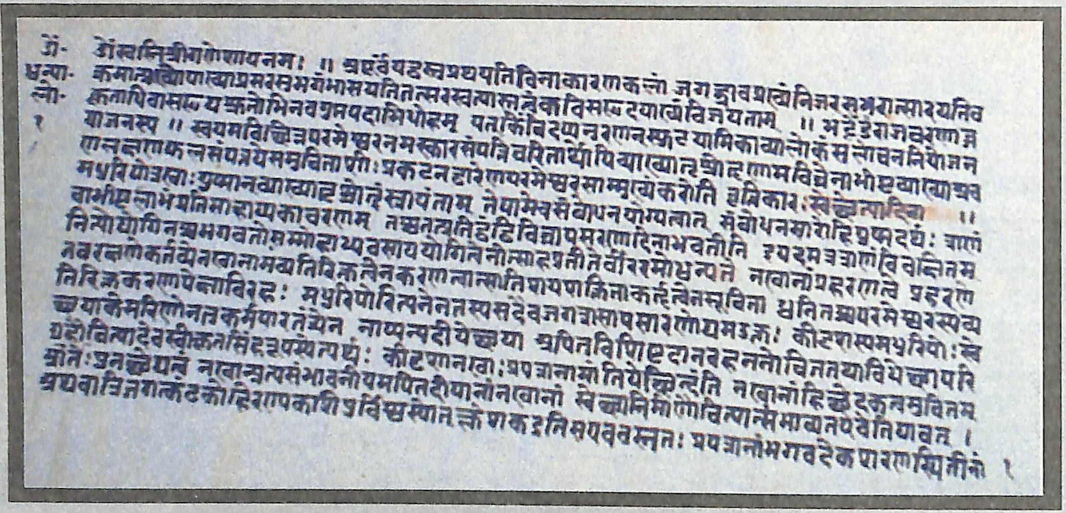
(Madhuraja Yogin)

Folios from a manuscript of Parātriṁśikā Vivaraṇa in Shāradā Script

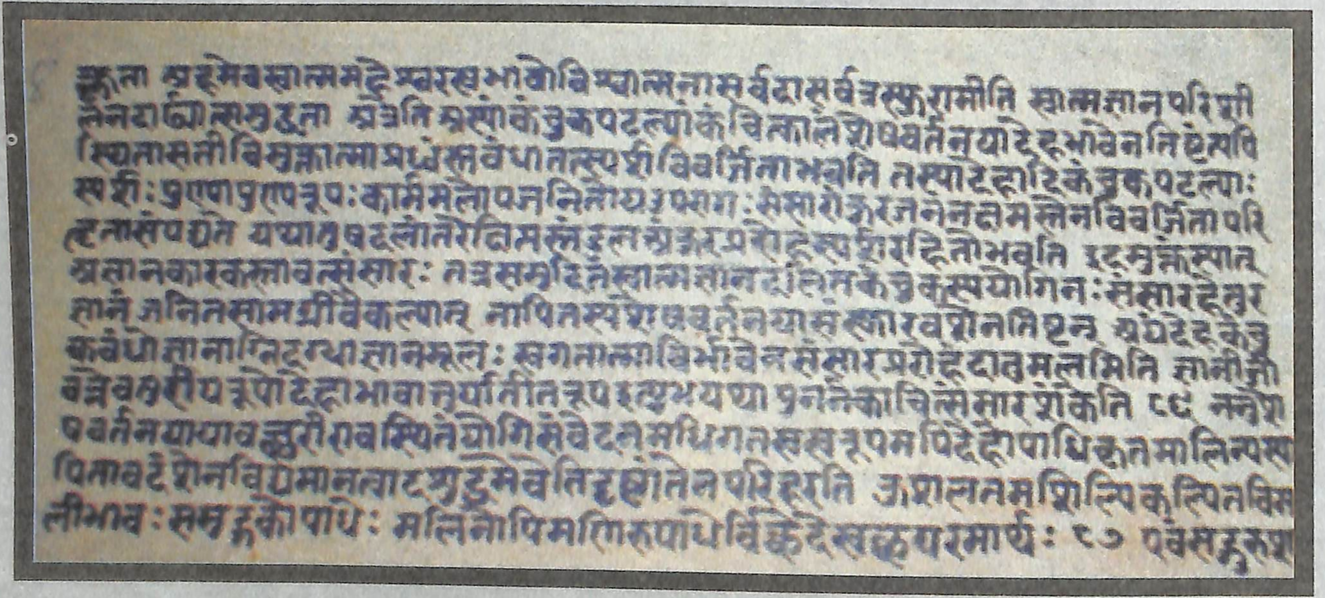




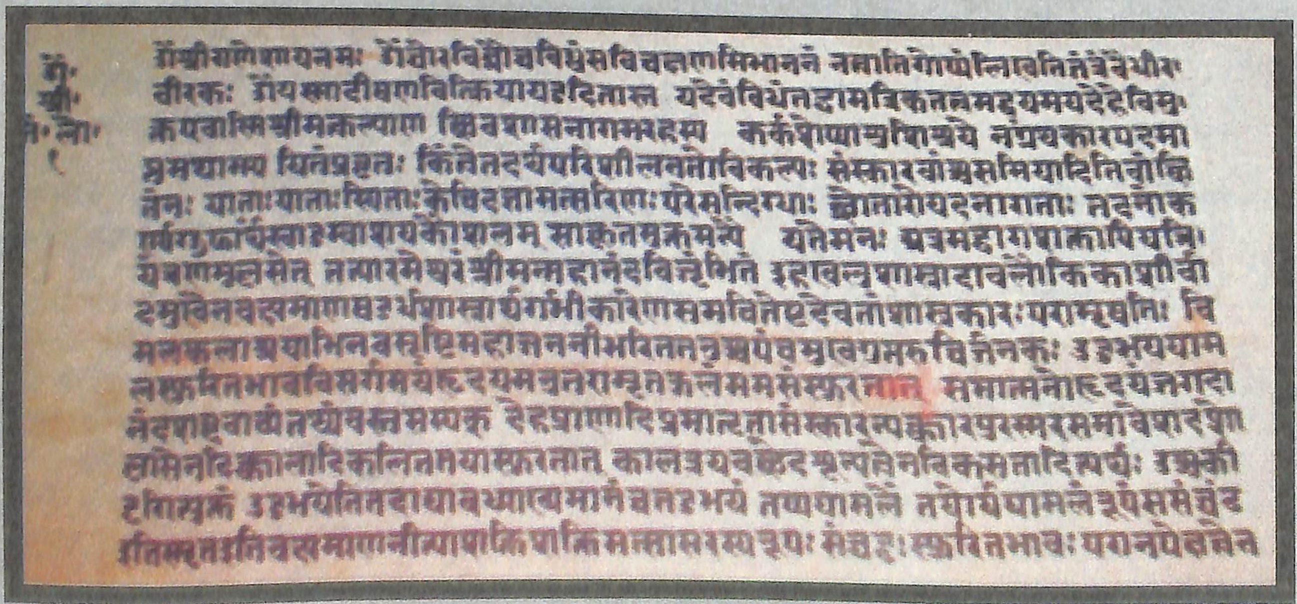
Scindhia Prachyavidya Shodh Pratishthan



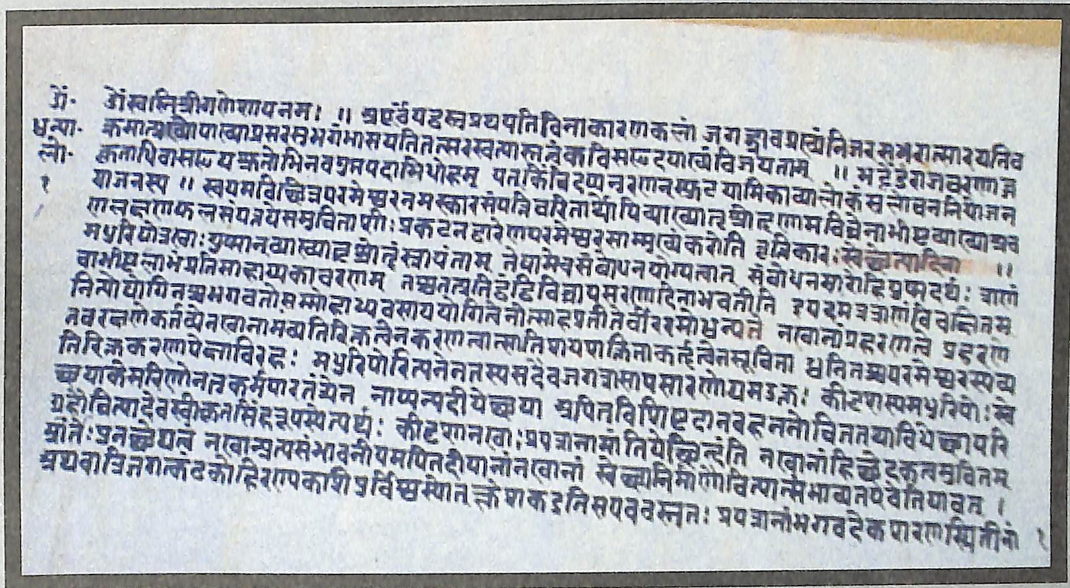
Parmarthasāra, in Devanāgarī script



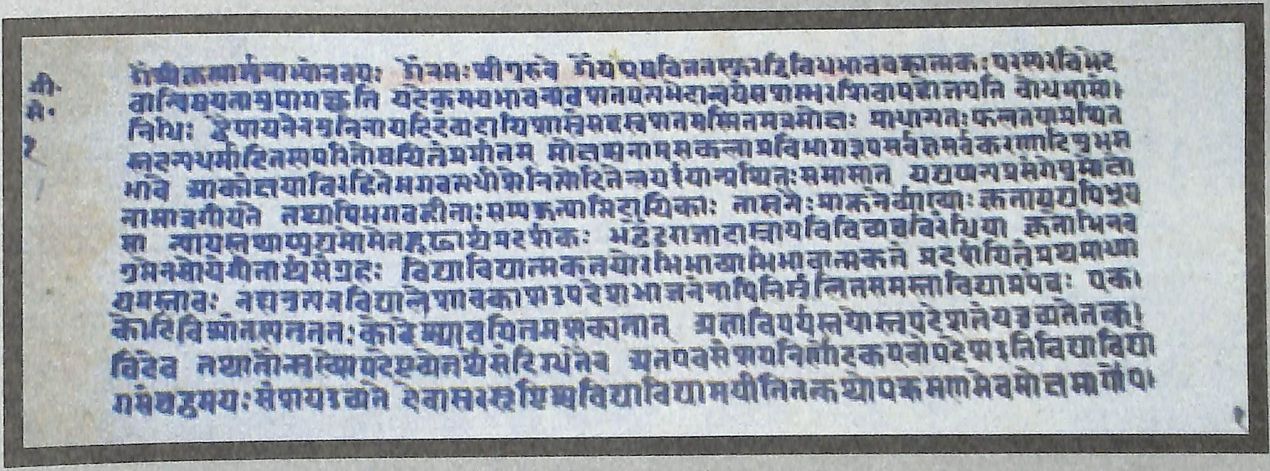
Folios from manuscripts of *Tantrāloka* in Devanāgarī script



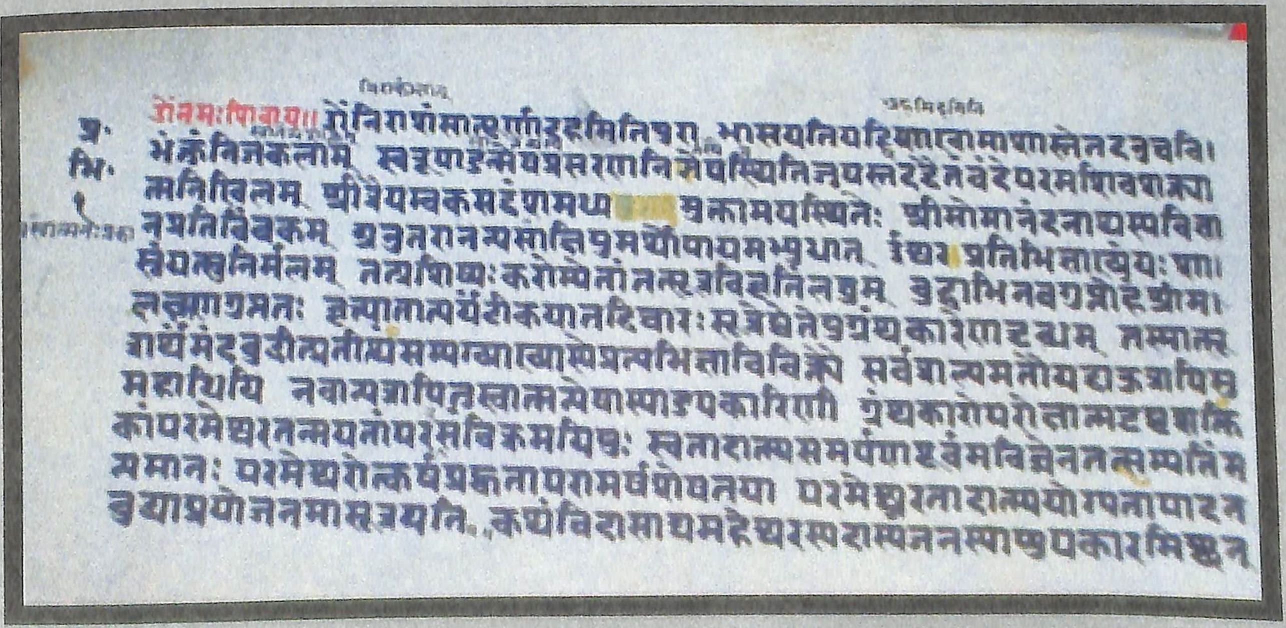
Shri Raghunath Temple MSS, Library, Jammu



Folio from Bhagvadgītartha Saṁgraha in Devanāgarī script



Folio from *Pratyabhijñā Vimarśinī* in Devanāgarī script



Shri Raghunath Temple MSS, Library, Jammu

आचार्य अभिनवगुप्तपाद कृत भैरव स्तोत्र

Acharya Abhinavagupta's *Bhairava Stotra*

(This *stotra* composed by Abhinavagupta in 4068 Saptarshi Era or 992 CE is perhaps the most popular and beautiful hymn written by him. It is said that he entered the Bhairava cave (now called Biru) in Kashmir along with his 1200 disciples singing this hymn with great devotion and was never seen coming out.)

व्याप्तचराचर भावविशेषं चिन्मयमेकमनन्तमनादिम्।
भैरवनाथमनाथशरण्यं तन्मयचित्ततया हृदि वंदे।।1।।

त्वन्मयमेतदशेषमिदानीं भाति मम त्वदनुग्रहशक्त्या।
त्वं च महेश! सदैव ममात्मा स्वात्ममयं मम तेन समस्तम्।।2।।

स्वात्मनि विश्वगते त्वयि नाथे तेन न संसृतिभीतिः कथाऽस्ति।
सत्स्वपि दुर्धरदुःखविमोह – त्रासविधायिषु कर्मगणेषु।।3।।

अन्तक! मां प्रति मा दृशमेनां क्रोधकरालतमां विदधीहि।
शंकरसेवनचिन्तनधीरो भीषणभैरवशक्तिमयोऽस्मि।।4।।

इत्थमुपोढभवन्मयसंविद् – दीधितिदारितभूतमिस्त्रः।
मृत्युयमान्तककर्मपिशाचै – र्नाथ! नमोऽस्तु न जातु बिभेमि।।5।।

प्रोदितसत्यविबोधमरीचि – प्रोक्षितविश्वपदार्थसतत्त्वः।
भावपरामृतनिर्भरपूर्णे त्वय्यऽहमात्मनि निर्वृतिमेमि।।6।।

मानसगोचरमेति यदैव क्लेशदशाऽतनुतापविधात्री।
नाथ! तदैव मम त्वदभेद – स्तोत्रपराऽमृतवृष्टिरुदेति।।7।।

शंकर! सत्यमिदं व्रतदान – स्नानतपो भवतापविनाशि।
तावकशास्त्रपराऽमृतचिन्ता सिध्यति चेतसि निर्वृतिधाराः।।8।।

नृत्यति गायति हृष्यति गाढं संविदियं मम भैरवनाथ!
त्वां प्रियमाप्य सुदर्शनमेकं दुर्लभमन्यजनैः समयज्ञम्।।9।।

वसुरसपौषे कृष्णदशम्यामभिनवगुप्तः स्तवमिदमकरोत्।
येन विभुर्भवमरुसन्तापं शमयति झटिति जनस्य दयालुः।।10।।

इति श्री अभिनवगुप्ताचार्यकृता शिवचामरस्तुतिः।।

Vyāpta carācara bhāva viśeṣaṁ cinamayamekam anantamanādiṁ /
Bhairavanāthamanātha śaraṇyaṁ tanmay citta tvayā hṛdi vande //1//

Tvanmatametad aśeṣam idānīm bhāti mama tvadanugrahaśaktyā /
Tvaṁ ca Maheśa sadaiva mamātmā svātmamayaṁ mama tena samastaṁ //2 //

Svātmani viśvagate tvayi nāthe tena na saṅsṛti bhīti. kathā'sti /
Satsvapi durdhara duḥkhavimoha trāsa vidhāyiṣu karmagaṇeṣu //3 //

Antaka! mām prati mā dṛsamenāṁ krodhakarālatamāṁ vidadhīhi /
Śaṅkara sevana cintana dhīro bhīṣaṇa Bhairava Śaktimayo'smi // 4 //

Ithamupoḍha bhavanmaya saṁvid dīdhati dārita bhūritamisraḥ /
Mṛtyu Yamāntaka karmapiśācer nātha! namo'stu na jātu vibhemi // 5 //

Prodita satya vibodha marīci prokṣita viśva padārtha satattvaṁ /
Bhāva parāmṛta nirbhara pūrṇe tvayya'hamātmani nirvṛtimemi // 6 //

Mānasgocarameti yadaiva kleśa daśā'tanu tāpavidhātrī /
Nātha! Tadaiva mamatvadabhedastotra parā'mṛta vṛṣṭirudeti // 7 //

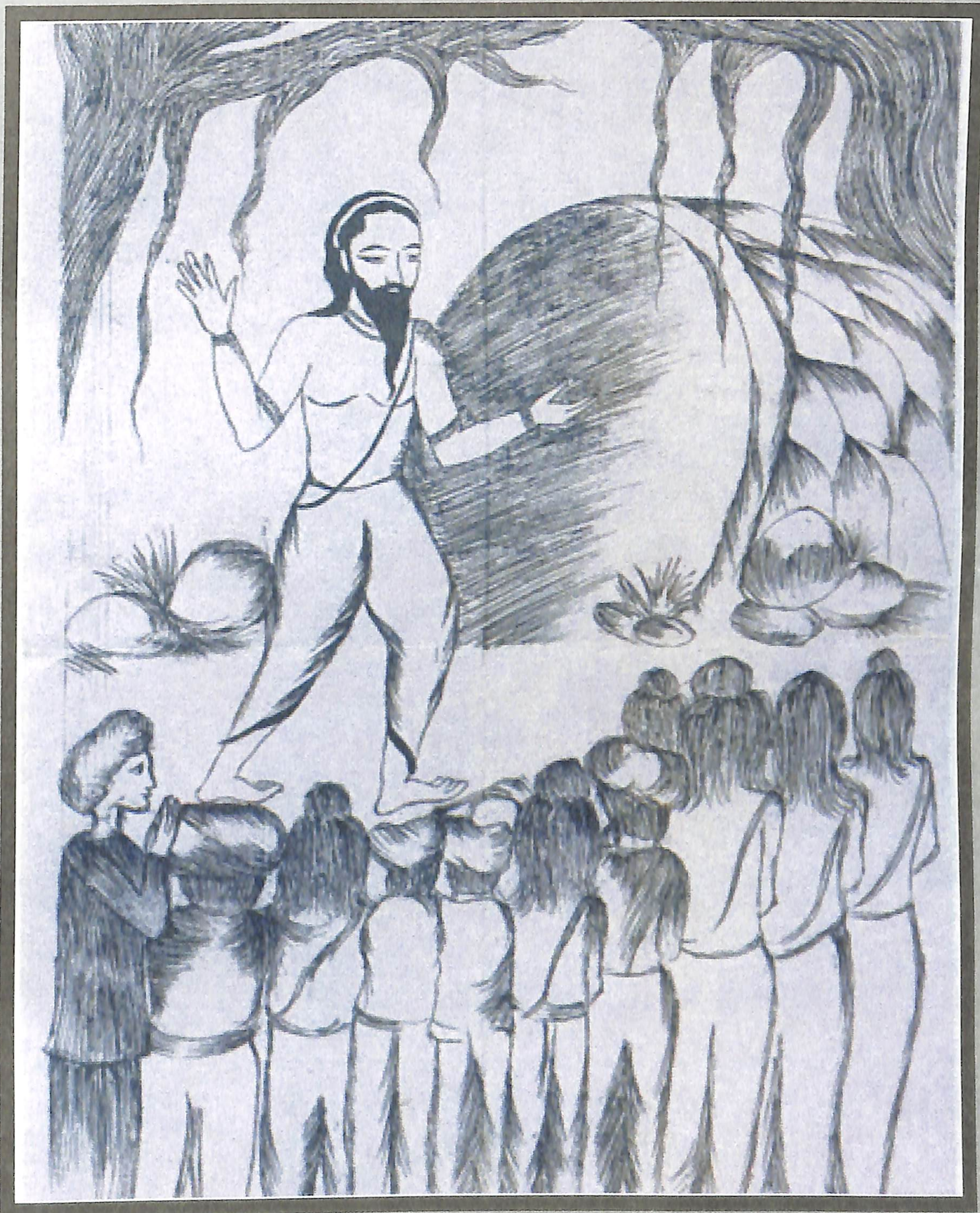
Śaṅkara! satyamidaṁ vratadāna snānatapo bhavatāpavināśi /
Tāvakaśāstra parā'mṛta cintā sidhyati cetasi nirvṛtidhārāḥ // 8 //

Nṛtyati gāyati hṛṣyati gāḍhaṁ saṁvidiyaṁ mama Bhairavanātha! /
Tvāṁ priyamāpya sudarśanamekaṁ durlabhaṁ anya janaiḥ samayajñaṁ // 9 //

Vasurasapauṣe kṛṣṇa daśamyām Abhinavaguptaṁ stavamidamakarot /
Yena vibhurbhavamaru saṅtāpaṁ śamayati jhaṭiti jansya dayāluḥ // 10 //

Iti Śrī Abbhinavguptācrāyakṛtā Śivacāmarastutiḥ/ /

Abhinavaguptapādcārya taking leave of his disciples before entering the Bhairava Cave, Kashmir.



Sketch by Ms Richa Sharma, a Ph.D. scholar of MTUAT University, Udaipur, Rajasthan

The tradition says that on one day Abhinavagupta, after finishing his work, as he thought, along with twelve hundred disciples walked into the Bhairava cave and was never seen again. The cave is there even now. It is about five miles from Magam, a place midway between Srinagar and Gulmarg. a village in the neighborhood and a brook running down below the hill, wherein the cave is both known by the name of Biruva and so is the cave itself."

– Dr.Kanti Chandra Pandey in
***Abhinavagupta**: An Historical and Philosophical Study.*



ABHINAVAGUPTA CAVE AT BEERU, DISTRICT BADGAM, KASHMIR

The cave in which Abhinavagupta is believed to have entered along with twelve hundred of his disciples, when he felt that the mission of his life was complete singing *Bhairvastava*, a hymn to Shiva that he had composed himself. The cave is located in Beeru or Beerwa town of the Badgam district of Kashmir, 35 kms. to the north of Srinagar and about 10 kms. from Magam. The cave is known as *Batta Goph*, or 'the Cave of the Kashmiri Pandits', and has its mouth on the eastern side of a hilltop known as Bairam. There are reports that illegal stone quarrying is going on at the site on the north-western and eastern sides for more than two decades now, causing irreparable damage to the cave which is of great value as a heritage site associated with Abhinavagupta. (*Courtesy: Veer Ji Saraf*)

Exegesis



Abhinavagupta on Exposition and Meaning

Dr. Rajnish Kumar Mishra

In India, the way tradition of exposition (*nirvacana*), results into the formation of multiple thought systems, makes it, arguably, unique among all of the world's intellectual traditions. This, multiplicity of inferences or multiple layers in semantics, is inherent to India's intellectual insight. Here, multiplicity is not perceived in terms of opposition. In this intellectual and experiential space, the same text is expounded in terms of dual, non-dual or dual-cum-non-dual propositions. In fact, for enrichment, these thought systems engage with *vāda* (disputation).

I. Some issues in exposition and meaning

J. F. Staal notes the mode and nature of India's intellectual traditions: "Obsession with language on the one hand and with philosophy on the other characterizes the Indian thought systems."[1] At the core of this intellectual and intuitive quest and realization of the Ultimate, language figures as one of the most central concerns. Language is both *mantra* as well as *prapañca*. It is *prapañca*, a construct, when it constitutes and makes us aware of the world of experience – subjective or objective, subtle or gross. It involves polarity such as word and meaning, word and the world, or signifier and signified. It causes difference, segmentation, sequentiality, multiplicity and, in a way, a heterocosom – something more or less than whatever is given. In the thought-system of Bhartṛhari, our foremost grammarian-philosopher, this is the *vivarta* aspect of language.[2] But when it rests in its own pristine form (*svarūpa* or *tattva*), it is *mantra*. It does not mean, refer to, or construct anything outside its domain, but permeates everything – being or non-being.[3] In fact, the goddess *Vāk (Ṛgveda)* pronounces in the first person mode that nothing is beyond her domain – whether conceptually constructed or ontologically given. This insight flows through the vast *Āgamic* and *Vedic* discourses. All rational discourses are primarily linguistic enterprises. Discourse is again the *prapañca* or *vivarta* aspect of language but it is rather inevitable. The *tattva* or the Ultimate Self is not confined in this discourse but there is no other way to know or approach it. So, to begin with, it is almost conditional to construct a discourse, but what is more essential is to transcend it. *Aparā vidyā* culminates in the infinitude of *parā* – the Ultimate Self that is the goal of all the knowledge systems of India.[4]

Hence, language deserves a careful study, with all its ontological and epistemological implications, which is attested by a large number of texts and thinkers in a long "continuous" and "cumulative" tradition of language study.[5] The centrality of language in Indian thought is again marked by the fact that out of the six ancillary sciences to the Veda, four are directly associated with language, i.e. *śikṣā* (general phonetics), *nirukta* (etymology), *vyākaraṇa* (grammar) and *chanda* (prosody).[6]

What is noteworthy in this context is that while building up these disciplines (now the core branches of modern linguistics), philosophical vision is always implicit in defining and refining the analytical methods and principles, linguistic components and categories, the conventionally established or naturally inherent relationship of form and substance, and the materiality and conceptuality of a sign system like language. That is why it is always possible to talk about the philosophy or

1. J.F.Staal, "Sanskrit Philosophy of Language" in *Current Trends in Linguistics*, Vol. V, p. 499.
2. *Vākyapadīya*, I.1.
3. *Ṛgveda, Vāgambhṛṇisūkta (X. 125)* and *Dirghatamas (I. 164). Śāradātilakaṁ and Kāmika Āgama elaborate upon the concept of mantra.*
4. (1) *Maitrāyaṇī Upaniṣad*, 6.22 : *dve brahmaṇī veditavye śabdabrahma param ca yat/ śabdabrahmaṇi niṣṇāta param brahmādhigacchati ///*
   (2) *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, 1.14.: *dve vidye veditavye iti sma ha yadbrahamavido vadanti parācaivāparā ca.*
5. Kapil Kapoor, 1998, *Literary Theory: Indian Conceptual Framework*, p. 7.
6. The other two associated disciplines are: *kalpa* (rituals) and *jyotiṣa* (astronomy).

the overarching/unifying principle like *Brahma*, or *Śabdabrahma*, in the language-related disciplines in India. The non-dualistic mode of thought posits coherence between two or multiple principles, in a number of disciplines. Nothing, therefore, is perceived and studied in isolation.[7] Every theme is conceptualized as a constituent of the total system. The Indian knowledge systems do not involve hierarchy of intellectual disciplines; rather, they are structured horizontally. Therefore, it is rare to attest here the "contest of faculties." Both *parā* and *aparā* are the forms of knowledge and are worthy of being acquired with deep reverence.[8] "Association of faculties" is the norm in India's intellectual traditions.

It has been argued above that language, as a system of abstract symbols, creates a heterocosom. It is because of the fact that language itself is a *structured* entity at the level of form as well as substance. So when it functions as an epistemological instrument, it *structures* reality as well. The gvedic seer, Dīrghatamas, reveals this creative and epistemological aspect of language: Language fashions out manifold forms in the ocean of reality.[9]

II. Interpreting the code system

Again, *āgama* and *nigama* involve code systems. One may read more than one meaning or any number of meanings as long as the signification continues in conformity with the conceptual structures of the text. Or in the "absence" of any given meaning, one may also make a point, like Kautsa did, that the Vedic hymns are meaningless. Multiplicity of meaning is inherent in language as a cognitive system. It is constitutive in nature, which an insightful and receptive reader/listener/exegete constitutes in the process of textual interaction. Meaning is not a static or frozen entity. As a multi-layered entity, it evolves, or emanates, out of a configurational process. In the technical terminology of Yāska, meaning is *bhāva*. It is not "being" but "becoming." It comes into being through a process known as "interpretation." Interpretation is the act of a consistent, receptive and creative intellect. Since all meanings are constituted in the domain of intellection, this process involves a matrix of psycho-cognitive elements along with already distilled and accumulated impressions (*samskāra*). It is again important to underline the fact that interpretation, as *nirvacana,* widely differs from the Western notion of hermeneutics, that is, a search for the given scriptural meaning.

Of all the instruments of exegesis, *nirvacana* (literally, the exposition of the full semantic range of a term; etymology) entwined with philosophical perspectives, emerges as the most profound one. It combines the morphological as well as the semantic aspect of a linguistic sign. One may witness the multiple facets of an expositional procedure when:

(1) one word is derived from two verbal roots (as *citta* from the verbal roots *ci* and *cit* in the Buddhist and the Śaiva, as also in Vedānta, philosophies respectively);

(2) a word expresses different meanings because the verbal root itself is polyvalent; and

(3) two or more than two words are derived from the same verbal root; and finally,

(4) a verbal root posits two apparently opposite lexical meanings and in a given philosophical context both these meanings are equally pertinent (*śūnya* is derived from the verbal root *śu*, which signifies 'empty' as well as 'full').

But before attending to these issues let us examine the term "etymology" itself and the problems associated with understanding its meaning. It is also noteworthy to see how the problems posed by etymology in the West can be resolved significantly through the exegetical devices of *nirvacana* as expounded by Yāska in the 9th century B.C.

Etymology, in the West, has remained a diachronic study of a word and the goal is to ascertain the origin, history and derivation of a word. It is not a study of the "structure" of morphological form and content, but the study of "change" recorded at different points of time in the history of word. Plato, in his celebrated dialogue *Cratylus*, raised serious objections against the etymological method:

(1) corruption or change in the primary phonetic form cannot be substantially established;

(2) corruption or change in the original meaning cannot be convincingly recorded; and, above all,

(3) there is a lack of a scientific and systematic basis for etymological enquiry.

7.It has been stated that all the *śāstras* are interrelated. Bhartṛhari (in *Vākyapadīya* I. 1-9) expounds the integrity of knowledge and reality and as to how they are realized as different disciplines and the thought systems.

8. *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (I.1.3.) characteristically states the knowledge centrality of the Indian culture. It sets forth the central issue: What is there, O Teacher, knowing which all other things become known? See also f. n. 4 above.

9. *Rgveda*, I.164.41

This reluctance towards etymology is evident in the Western linguistic tradition right up to Voltaire and Max Mueller. Voltaire's famous quip is that etymology is a science in which vowels count for nothing and consonants for very little. Max Mueller ironically remarked that a sound etymology has nothing to do with sound.[10] However, the preference for meaning over form in the Western tradition comes closer to the second general principle of *nirvacana* as laid down by Yāska.

Nirvacana, in the Indian tradition, is basically a synchronic study of a morphological construction. It studies the phonetic, morphemic and the corresponding semantic structure of a word. It is a device to explicate the full semantic range of a word on the basis of its textual and general usages. Unlike the Greek and European etymologists, Indian exegetes and etymologists (with their richer connotations of etymology) never failed to recognize the core component and the formative or the grammatical components namely, *prakṛti* (nominal and verbal base) and *pratyaya* (lit. the element which modifies and manifests the core meaning of the base component; suffixes=*paraśca*).[11]

Yāska is perhaps the first exegete who comes up in the defence of the meaningfulness of the Vedic hymns. As a semanticist, he provided the scientific foundation to the general principles of etymology and his *Nirukta* is the first book on etymology in the world. In the tradition of intellectual disputation, he reports the debate regarding the meaning of the Vedic hymns, mainly originating from the opaqueness of the Vedic words and language. He lists such words in the *Nighaṇṭu* on a well-reasoned device of synonymy and then expounds the general theory of etymology. This theory, as suggested above, implies a theory of signification. Signification is an active process of "becoming," in which events acquire meanings. It is a way of constructing a specific perception of reality. As Barbara Barnett puts it, "It is not just understanding *what* something means, but *how* it means."[12] It is constituted by presenting, selecting, focusing and contrasting the signifying ensembles, and in this whole process language is a crucial instrument of signification as well as a manifestation of it. Words and events are "made to mean."

We have stated above that meaning is a process or a "becoming." It is definitely parallel to the cultural process. In this context, Yāska reports an interesting debate between Śākaṭāyana and Gārgya on the derivation of nominal base from the verbal root and seems to be upholding the view that all nouns are reducible to verbal roots. Nouns are "being" and verbs "becoming" and the two are always interlaced. The former is a product (*sattva*) and the latter a process (*bhāva*) whereby to arrive at a meaning.[13] Primacy of verb over noun as the root of morphological construction suffices to establish that meaning is "constitutive" in nature as against "given" or "fixed." Likewise, Sanskrit roots are multivalent; hence multiple or desired meanings can be obtained with regard to purpose, context and the relationship that holds between the various lexical components in a syntactic domain.[14]

III. Methods and Illustrations:

In the first section we have modified the meaning and function of the term etymology. In the present context it means *nirvacana. It is in this sense that* it refers to a process of signification and also becomes a comprehensive means of interpretation. The vast body of commentary literature on the seminal *sūtra* texts in almost all the domains of knowledge is evidence of how the best minds have been engaged in bringing out the multifaceted verbal import embedded in a text. As the *sūtra* or *sūtra* texts are highly condensed contents composed in a nominal technical language, they have always been explicated in conformity with the inherent code system and also with regard to some thought systems. In his comprehensive study of the interpretation of texts in the Indian tradition, Professor Kapil Kapoor has listed and categorized ten instruments of exegesis as follows:[15]

(A) Verbal testimony

1. *śruti* (the Veda)[16]
2. *darśana-śāstra* (primary texts of schools of philosophy)
3. illustrations from *itihāsa-purāṇa*

(B) The interpreter's belief system

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10. See L. Sarup, 1920, Introduction to the *Nirukta*, pp.63-64.
11. Pāṇini III.1.1-2.
12. Emphases mine.
13. *Nirukta* I.3 records the six stages of 'becoming' according to Vārṣyāyaṇi: *jāyate, viparamate, vardhate'pakṣīyate vinaśyatīti*; i.e. genesis or birth, existence, alteration, growth, decay and destruction.
14. Bhartṛhari in *Vākyapadīya* II.314-6 lists 32 such factors that help arriving at a specific meaning or meanings. Again, in order to map the range of linguistic meaning, it is stated, "If we are able to explain how indirect meanings arise *systematically*, we are able to claim that all potential meanings are inherent in the text — all that the reader does is to exploit this system of verbal symbolism to construct a particular meaning". (Kapil Kapoor, 1998, p.21).
15. Kapil Kapoor, 1990, p.243.
16. We may include *āgama* as well under this title if the term *śruti* strictly refers to the Veda only.

4. *sārvabhauma-siddhānta* (assumption) or the principle upheld

(C) General rules of Interpretation

5. *saṅgati*[17]
6. *paribhāṣā-nyāya* (rules of interpretation)
7. *laukika nyāya* (judgment employed in common life)

(D) The theory of language

8. *vyākaraṇa* (grammar)
9. *nirvacana* ('etymology' for meaning)
10. *śabda-śakti* : *lakṣaṇā vṛtti* (symbolic meaning).

In the exceptional interpretation of ***anuttara,*** we may observe how through the application of the instruments listed above (and more specifically under nos. 2,4,5,6, 8, 9 and 10), Ācārya Abhinavagupta has expounded the whole of the Kashmir Śaiva philosophy through this single key concept. This has become possible because of the highly inflected and technical nature of a language like Sanskrit (as we observe below), the "continuous" and "cumulative" tradition of texts and thinkers, his own immense scholarship in a number of knowledge domains, and above all his own meditative/mystic experiences, which only another *sādhaka*-poet like Kabir could voice: *śūnya śikhara para anahada bāje* ("that non-manifest sound resonates at the pinnacle of *śūnya*").

In the opening verse of *Parātrīśikā* (also known as *Parātriṁśikā* or *Anuttarasūtra* which in fact forms a part of the *Rudrayāmalatantra*) Devī asks Śiva:

> *anuttaram katham Deva ! sadya kaulikasiddhidam /*
> *yena vijātamātreṇa khecarī samatāṁ vrajet / /*

[The Goddess said to Bhairava: O God, how does the unsurpassable divine consciousness bring about immediately the achievement of the identity of the empirical I with the perfect I-consciousness of Śiva which comes about the physical body and the mere knowledge of which one acquires sameness with the Universal Consciousness-power (*khecarī*)?][18]

In a way, the whole text of *Parātrīśikā* is an interpretation or *vimarśa* of *anuttara* by none other than Bhagavān Śiva Himself to His beloved wife Pārvatī. In the commentary *Vivaraṇa* (or *Vivṛti*) thereupon, Ācārya Abhivavagupta builds up the theoretical exposition of the Śaiva system, with his sixteen interpretations related to this key concept.

Let us first study the morphological structure and etymology of this term:

ana (prefix) + *ud* (verbal root) + *tara* (suffix of comparison).

Ana, an Indo-European negative prefix, itself has six meanings: similarity, absence, otherness, shortness, non-centrality and contradiction.[19] The Buddhist philosopher Śāntarakṣita[20] records the typology of negation broadly as *paryudāsa* and *prasajyapratiedha*; partial and absolute respectively, and again, partial is subcategorized as negation of ideal conception or universal (*buddhyātman*), and negation of an object (*arthātman*).

The verb root *ud* equally has a rich semantic content: potential, superior, manifestation, absence, distinction, beyond, etc. *Tara* is again an Indo-European suffix of comparison between two entities (as in laghu*tara* or *brighter*). One may easily see the vast semantic range embedded in the Sanskrit morphology. Quite appropriately, Betty Heimann observes, "From the very correctness of Sanskrit linguistic expression there radiate widely divergent meanings, and more divergent meanings in fact than in any other European language. The more dynamic the character of language, the greater the impetus for such radiation, i.e. for divergence of the meanings derived."[21]

Anuttara is the first word of the first verse of the *Parātrīśikā* which denotes "the Ultimate", and "nothing beyond that". In the context of Kashmir Śaivism, it refers to the Ultimate principle (*tattva*) which is a synonym of Paramaśiva. Abhinavagupta, initiated and trained in the Kaula branch of Kashmir Śaivism, accepts *anuttara* as the 37th principle. All 36 ontological principles are the manifestations of this Ultimate principle. We may present the sixteen interpretations of *anuttara* by Ācārya Abhinavagupta and also other associated/implied interpretations in the following way:

(I) 1. That beyond which there is nothing more or additional. So Paramaśiva is the Ultimate principle or, in other words, the sole substratum of the thirty-six ontological principles ranging from *Śiva* to *pṛthvī* (earth) – from the most subtle to the most gross form

17. *Saṅgati*, coherence is closer to the concept of 'intertextuality' in contemporary literary theory.
18. Translation by Jaidev Singh.
19. Nāgeśabhaṭṭa quotes Bhartṛhari: *tatsādṛśyamabhāvaśca tadanyatvam tadalpatā / aprāśastyam virodhaśca nañyatha ṣaṭ prakīrtitā / /* (*Paramalaghumañjūṣā*, Chapters on Meaning of Indeclinable) See also *Śabdakalpadruma*
20. *Tattvasaṁgraha* 1003-4
21. Betty Heimann, 1951, p v

2. That state in which there is no question or answer or no duality of subject and object in *samvit* (consciousness or knowledge);

3. Crossing all the levels of bondage, liberation: a stage where there is no bondage so the issue of liberation becomes redundant;

4. That in which the power (*śakti*) does not involve sequentiality in ascending through the six *cakra*;

5. That from where one goes beyond all kinds of bondages (*uttara* also means bondage);

6. That in which there is no space even for "liberation" as there is no real bondage (the world is not unreal or the cause of bondage according to this system);

7. Where there is no act of verbal conceptualization, like "this" or "that" or logical reasoning;

8. Where there is no relativity/ hierarchy either in the ontological principles or in the states of consciousness or efforts (*upāya* like *āṇava*, *Śākta* and *Śāmbhava*. *Anupāya* -- where little or no effort is required is the state of *anuttara*);

9. Where there is no question or relevance of cast hierarchy – superior or inferior;

10. That absolute and integrated power in which there are no conceptual distinctions like *paśyantī*, *madhyamā* and *vaikharī*, or,

11. *aghorā*, *ghorāghora* and *ghorā*, or,

12. *parā*, *sūkṣamā* or *sthūlā*, etc.;

13. *anuttara* may be derived from the verbal root √ *nud* [*a* + *nut* + *tara*] which means to impel, to push, and *tara* means "going beyond." Hence the term means going beyond by the process of *yoga*/ *dīkṣā* (initiation);

14. *ana* in *anuttara* can be derived from the verbal root √ *an* (+ *kvip* suffix), which means "to breathe" and by implication *aṇu* or "individual self." The individual self or the real self is not involved in what the sense organs experience; hence it is designated as *śūnya pramātā*;

15. That Supreme power /A/ [*a* + *nut* + *tara*], which rests in its pristine pure form like the unstirred ocean and is beyond description; and,

16. That which is beyond the causal relationship and sequentiality.

(II) The Śaiva system provides an ontological base to the recognized speech sounds. In this context, *anuttara* is symbolized by /*a*/, the sole substratum of all the speech sounds.[22]

(III) There are 16 *kalā-s* (lit. part; the quantifying unit of time and space), *anuttara* is beyond that and hence termed the 17th art, i.e. it is the total darkness (*amākhyā*), something that is non-quantifiable.[23] The known fourteen *kalā-s* in the moon are due to the sun. The 15th is the *kalā* of moon itself. The sixteenth is always hidden or non-manifest and 17th is non-explicable, as it is beyond the binaries like positive or negative. This is *anuttara tattva* and also the *amākalā*, the total darkness – the total reality that is non-measurable. In the *tāntrika* or *āgamic* metaphor, "darkness" is not ignorance but signifies the vast, unknowable, non-quantifiable, and undifferentiated Ultimate Reality. It is not "ignorance" but "inability to know."

In another typology of *kalā*, *anuttara* is *śāntātīta* or beyond even the *śāntākalā*.[24]

(IV) In Mahāyāna Buddhism, *anuttara* is related to a specific ritual to attain the *bodhi citta* (the compassionate and unperturbed receptive self).

(V) Nāgārjuna states that reality is beyond all conceptual categories: (1) it exists, (2) it does not exist, (3) It exists as well as it does not exist, (4) it neither exists nor it does not exist. Hence, it cannot be explicated in any conceptual system.[25]

(VI) Arguing on the same lines, though, in his own Vedāntic system, Śrīharṣa designates the Ultimate Reality as belonging to the 5th category.[26]

(VII) Ācārya Śaṅkara, commenting on the *Gauḍapāda Kārikā*, states that all these four conceptual categories (recorded above) are the veils of the *Paramatattva* (the Ultimate Reality).

(VIII) According to Ānandatīrtha, the following schools of thought belong to these four categories:

1. *asti*: Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Mīmāṁsā

2. *nāsti*: Vijñānavādī Bauddha (the Yogācāra Idealism)

22. This is discussed at length in another paper titled "Ontology of Speech Sounds: A Śaiva Exposition of Pāṇini's *Māheśvarasūtra*" in *Indian Knowledge Systems*, Shimla: IIAS. (2005).
23. *Viveka* commentary on *Tantrāloka* on I.1 says, "*kalāsaptadaśī yāsāvamṛtākārarūpinī*". Also implied in the apparent and non-apparent syllables – the *bījākṣara*-s of Śrīvidyā.
24. *nivṛttikalā, pratiṣṭhākala, vidyākalā, śāntākalā* and *śāntātīta*
25. *Mādhyamikakārikā* I.7.
26. *Naiṣadhīyacarita* XIII.36.

3. *asti-nāsti*: Digambara Jaina

4. *nāsti-asti*: Śūnyavādī Bauddha

(IX) *Śūnya* (√ *śū* = "to swell" and "to be swollen;" both the opposite meanings – "empty" as well as "full") is unique in this sense that without a negative prefix it expresses negative as well as positive meanings. Abhinavagupta interprets *anuttara* with all its positive and negative connotations with a sound etymological base (*ana* is not a negative prefix only, as stated above). This can be considered a parallel construct to *śūnya*, however, keeping the philosophical distinctions of these two systems in view.

As explained above, it is evident that *nirvacana* is a mode or instrument of interpretation and signification. The condensed semantic content of a crucial term like *anuttara* reminds us of the rich and shared vocabulary of Indian intellectual systems. This is one of the high-frequency terms and a widely used key concept. In a number of thought systems and domains of knowledge, there is an undercurrent of this "philosophy of beyond" which implies that what is recorded or known is not the end of knowledge or reality, and this is the characteristic and spirit of a knowledge-centered civilization like India. The inherent logical space in key conceptual terms, such as *anuttara,* has always kept the Indian mind engaged in the quest of the Ultimate through the ages.

IV. Spectrum of exposition and meaning in Abhinavagupta

Let us conclude with a few assumptions. Since in this tradition, ideas are immanent and they are simply a matter of manifestation or projection, they are not 'manufactured' and hence they never cease to exist. They merely become non-visible at a specific point of time or in other words they go into hibernation.[27] India, because of its tradition of sustaining and propogating,[28] cultivated and nurtured the tradition of exposition, by attempting to encompass all the shades and hues of semantics. Here, systems are not built on a single text or a 'group of texts', but through a careful and scholarly exposition of all the seminal texts. Though '*prasthānatrayī*' (namely, *Upanaiṣad*, *Brahmasūtra* and *Bhagavadgītā*) is the source of Vedānta philosophy, it has been commentated upon by the other schools of thought as well. Abhinavagupta holds that despite many other commentaries available on the Bhagavadgītā, none equals his own commentary which expounds the deeper semantics of the text (*gūḍhārthaprakāśaka*).[29] This semantics is experiential in its content and not just logically structured. There is no denying what the other learned commentaries have achieved and contributed to their respective systems, but Abhinavagupta's is a bold attempt to create a scope for further exposition and justify the *Upanaiṣadic* dictum '*neti, neti*'... It is an endless process of signification and by implication it is one of the chief characteristics of the pagan Indian mind which is perhaps the last of the world's surviving pagan cultures.

It is the greatness of our thinkers that they brought about a major synthesis among the various streams of thought even while they established and consolidated their own respective systems. With due apologies to numerous other illustrious exponents of this tradition, we may illustrate this point putting forth at least four great teachers (*ācārya*-s) of the Indian intellectual tradition, namely, Acārya Nāgārjuna, Bhartṛhari, Ādi Śaṅkara and Abhinavaguptapadācārya. These four *ācārya*s, irrespective of their individual systems, need to be studied. Their work is priceless. But, if we, ritualistically, limit them to a specific system alone, we will, perhaps, lose sight of their major contributions, in the larger context of the Indian intellectual traditions in general. The common thread that runs through all the four is that they do not derive their methodology or set their goals in terms of rejection of or conflict with any other systems of thought. Bhartṛhari's own term '*sarvavādāvirodhinī*' (i.e. not opposed to any thought systems) best exemplifies this view and approach.[30] This insight, precisely, is common among these four philosophers. We shall discuss the first three of these thinkers on some other occasion, and focus only on the vast domain of creativity of Abhinavaguptapādācārya.

Ācārya Abhinavagupta has been variously designated as a poet, literary commentator, an aesthete, a mystic (a *yogin*, a *tāntrika*), a philosopher, a musician, a great devotee, a grammarian, an ardent seeker of knowledge. His own account of his great authoritative teachers of these disciplines suggests that the study and training he received under their able guidance inspired his own *upāya*-s (or *anupāya*) and made him an authority in a

27. Pāṇini (1.1.60.): *adarśanam lopaḥ*.
28. Interestingly both the meanings are embedded in the etymology of the term 'tantra'as it is derived from both the verbal roots: *trai* (to defend) and *tan* (disseminate). The *Kāmikāgama* states: *Tanoti vipulānarthān tantramantrasamanvitān/ trāṇam ca kurute yasmāt tantramityabhidhīyate//*
29. *Tāsvanaiyḥ prāktnairvyākhyāḥ kṛtā yadyapi bhūyasā/ nyyāyastathāpudyamo me guḍhārthaprakāśakaḥ.//* Maṅgala Verses 5.
30. *Vākyapadīya*, Brahmakāṇḍa 9.

number of disciplines.[31] Whichever be the domain -- poetics, philosophy, tantra, music, dramaturgy -- or however contentious the issues, if there is a view and exposition that overrides every other, it is always that of Abhinavagupta. We see in him a great convergence of Kula, Krama, Spanda, Pratyabhijñā and many other esoteric streams of mysticism. Scholars have attempted to classify his works thematically as well as chronologically[32] on the basis of the internal and other contextual evidences, but the fact is that when he expounds a theme relating to any of such disciplines, his integrated creative vision does not seem to pay much regard to these superfluous taxonomic devices. He is a *śivapramātā* (the one who has the profound and integral knowledge/experience of all the thirty-six ontological principles ranging from *Śiva* to *pṛthvī*), a *yoginībhū*,[33] a *Svacchandabhairava*,[34] an incarnation of Śrīkaṇṭha. Like the esoteric nature (*ātmagopana*) of tantra, he is not easily available to the students who aspire to study him. The more we explore him, the more we irresistibly want to know him.

At the end of his *Tantrāloka*[35] he gives us a glimpse into how he got engaged in the composition of this work which is, essentially, an exposition of the texts and injunctions of Śaiva systems. He states that having accepted the request of Mandra,[36] he deeply meditated upon the texts he had heard/learnt, all by himself. He achieved the essence of all these *śāstra*s in a style that was, characteristically, his own. He composed this text of great magnitude, both, in its form as well as its content. He aspires, "May Bhagavān Śiva be the listener of this encyclopedic composition which is the essence of all the *śāstras*." His intuitive reflection, guided by constant study and contemplation of the *śāstra*s, with the great teachers of his time, is, essentially, the method, of which, his exposition is the outcome. His method is all-inclusive. Nothing is discarded. Each contribution of his contemporary as well as preceding scholars and traditions has been fully acknowledged and then integrated in his theoretical framework. The touch of his extraordinary intellect transforms the theme into a living experience. Although he establishes it in the context of a literary composition, the connotation of the 'literary' here is *rasa* (i.e. what the knower experiences) which is of the nature of the knower's own being, *saṃvit*).[37] It is this *semantics* which is the goal of Abhinavagupta's exposition of the *śāstra* texts.

In the beginning of his celebrated commentary *Abhinavabhāratī*, he sets the mode, method and goal of his exposition: 1. To accept the relevant/meaningful text, 2. to discard whatever is irrelevant and meaningless (i.e. to edit and restore authenticity of the text), 3. to expound the meaning clearly, 4. to settle the seeming contradictions in the text, 5. to expound the theme in its totality, 6. to provide contextually relevant examples, 7. to discuss the partially stated facts and to establish their coherence with examples, 8. to establish coherence between the seemingly repetitive textual utterances, and 9. to summarize the major facts of the extensive exposition at the end.

Intertextuality, which the 9th century Sanskrit poetician, Rājaśekhara, in his *Kāvyamīmāṃsā*, calls *viracanā*) is a major dimension of Abhinavagupta's method of exposition. According to Rājaśekhara, *viracanā* is one of the sixteen sources of poetic meaning. However, these sources are not just confined to poetic meaning. These sources are comprehensive, general and pertain to any discipline and its exegetical device. *Tantrāloka* itself has at least fifty-six *transtextual* situations where there are "more overt relations between specific texts or between two particular

31. Sources of Abhinavagupta:

His teachers	Texts and disciplines studied under their guidance
1. Narsiṃhagupta	Grammar
2. Vāmanātha	Dual and dual-non-dual Tantra
3. Bhūtirājatanaya	Dualist Śaiva philosophies
4. Lakṣmaṇagupta	Pratyabhijñā, Krama, Trika
5. Bhaṭṭta Indurāja	Dhvani Siddhānta, *Gītā* (see *Hindi Abhinvabhāratī* p.35, *Bhagavad- Gītārthasaṃgraha* I.6.)
6. Bhūtirāja	Brahmavidyā, Krama *darśana*, dualistic Śaivāgamas
7. Tautta Bhaṭṭa	Nāṭāyaśāstra
8. Śambhūnātha	Kaulāgama
9. Abhinanda (10th C.A.D.)	Literature (author of *Kādambarī Kathāsāra*)

Abhinavagupta provides another list of his thirteen teachers (*Tantrāloka* 37.62-63) with whom he had studied and was blessed: 1. Śrīcandra Śarma, 2. Śrībhavānanda, 3. Śrībhaktivilāsa, 4. Śrīyogānanda, 5. Śrīabhinanda (already listed above under 9), 6. Śrīśivaśktinātha, 7. Śrīvicitranātha, 8. Śrīdharmānanda, 9. Śrīśivānanda, 10. Śrīvāmananātha, 11. Śrīudbhaṭnātha, 12. Śrībhūteśanātha, 13. Śrībhāskara, and 14. Śrīmukhānandanātha.

32. M.M. Mukundaram Shastri's Inroduction to *Tantrasāra* (English and Sanskrit introductions) and Dr. Kanti Chandra Pandey's *Abhinavagupta: An Historical and Philosophical Studies* (pp.41-43)
33. Vide Jayaratha's *Viveka* on *Tantrāloka* I.1.
34. *Svacchandatantra*, I.1.*viśvaikarūpaviśvātmaviśvasargādikāraṇam/ paraprakāśavapuṣam stmaḥ svacchandabhairavaṃ.//*
35. *Tantrāloka* 37.82-85.
36. An intimate childhood friend. *Tantrāloka* 37.72.
37. *Abhinavabhārati on the Nāṭyaśāstra 6.31. tatkāvāyrtho rasaḥ.*

texts" and many more occasions for *intertextuality* where "a more diffused penetration of an individual text, by memories, echoes, transformations, into the other texts", are recorded.[38] This intertextuality also helps us to build up internal chronology of Abhinavagupta's work. For example, his *Tantrasāra* was composed after the *Tantrāloka*[39] and *Abhinavabhāratī* was composed after the *Dhvanyālokalocana*.[40] Again in *Locana* he states, "*Tantrālokagranthe vicārya*",[41] which suggests that these two literary commentaries were composed after *Tantrāloka*. As a commentator, he has something more to say. His commentaries expand the scope of the theme and integrate it with and beyond the superficial categories of disciplines. This poet, scholar and mystic, works with integrity and transforms the textual semantics into an *aesthetic experience*. The description of goddesses of *parā*, *aparā* and *parāparā* is an evidence of this fact. In any case, this is a general framework of the *tantra* text and the Trika is an aesthetically designed philosophy. That is why, for Abhinavagupta, it is possible to draw a parallel metaphor between the thirty six ontological principles of the Śaiva cosmology and the thirty six chapters of the semiotic universe of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. Since there is no categorization in Śaiva ontology, as we see in the Vedānta or in Buddhism, where reality is threefold or twofold, we see the same *parāsaṃvit* (the universal consciousness) performing its fivefold acts without any interruption and with blissfulness. It is again possible for Abhinavagupta to philosophically expound a literary verse, as he does with "*ramyāṇi vīkṣya madurānsca niśamya śabdān...*"[42] (Kālidasa's *Abhijñānasākuntalaṃ*, 5) and also to quote from literature supporting his philosophical expositions. In *Īśvarapratybhijñāvivṛtivimarśinī* he quotes from *Kumārasambhavaṃ* and in *Īśvarapratybhijñāivimarśinī* he also expounds the philosophical theme with reference to Bharata and others.[43]

We may recall the pen-picture of the contemporary Kashmir, drawn by Abhinavagupta himself in the last forty verses of the last chapter of his *Tantrāloka*. Just a millennium ago, this Śāradādeśa (Sarvajñapīṭha) was a major confluence of Buddhism, Nyāya and Mīmāṃsā systems of philosophy and branches of Vedic, Śaiva and Śākta traditions. It is this very Kashmir that is being erased gradually from the collective memory of this sub-continent. Today, Kashmir Śaivism[44] (and "Kashmir" does not denote merely some geographical space) is like a forgotten chapter of Indian philosophy and the blame for this is to be shared by those who design curricula of the university education. And as much, if not more, by the void created by the forced migration of the Kashmiri Pandits from their ancestral and intellectual home, due to terror and violence. Not to study Abhinavaguptapādācārya simply means to pursue a flawed education. Not to study the cultural and philosophical traditions of Kashmir would amount to a total failure of education system in India.

38. Hawthorn, Jeremy, *A Glossary of Contemporary Literary Theory*, p.178.
39. *Vitatastantrāloko vigāhitum naiva śakyate sarvaiḥ*/ *Tantrasāra* 1.2.
40. *Tacca madīyādeva tadvivaraṇāt sahṛdayālokalocanādavadhāraṇīyaṃ*, quoted on p. 35 by Acharya Vishweshwara in his *Hindi Abhinavabhāratī*.
41. *Locana*, on 1.1.
42. *Abhinavabhārati* 6. 31.
43. *Īśvarapratybhijñāvimarśinī* 1.8.9. : *sukhaduḥkhaprāyāstu Bharatādyuktarūpāḥ...*
44. Here 'Kashmir' does not denote merely a geographical area. It is the same phenomenon that though most of Indian poeticians and aestheticians hailed from Kashmir, we have not popularized the term something like "Kashmir Poetics". Like Kashmir's philosophers, its poeticians also can be included under the general nomenclature "Indian".

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Thysis



Abhinavagupta's Paramārthasāra and the Trika-Kula Shaivism of Kashmir

Dr. Jeffrey S. Lidke

[One of the important works of Abhinavagupta, the Paramārthasāra makes some of the essential principles of the non-dual Shaiva philosophy of Kashmir accessible to the spiritual seekers while encapsulating its system of esoteric Tantric practices. It is an adaptation of an original 6th century text of the same name said to be written by Ādishesha, a Vaishnavite South Indian scholar, with Abhinavagupta transforming its very complexion and reformulating it in accordance with his vision of monistic Shaivism. This shows how closely ancient Kashmir and South India shared philosophical ideas and a corpus of sacred texts. Abhinavagupta's Paramārthasāra posits the concept of a unitary supreme reality which manifests itself as the universe with all its diversity, while retaining its transcendent nature. The cosmic evolution unfolds through a process of descent consisting of 36 tattvas or levels of consciousness from Parama Shiva and Shakti to gross matter. As part of his doctoral thesis, Dr. Jeffrey S. Lidke analyses in depth various aspects of philosophy and practice in Parmārthasāra.]

Introduction

The writings of the famous Tāntric guru and philosopher, Abhinavagupta (ca. 950-1025 C.E.), represent some of the finest reflections of Indian religio-philosophical thought. Of his many extant works, the *Paramārthasāra* (Essence of Supreme Truth) offers a succinct distillation of Abhinavagupta's literary and philosophical genius while also encapsulating the system of esoteric practices at the heart of his Tāntric system. The one-hundred-and-five verses of this composite text lay out the Śaivite vision of the universe as the unfolding of a unitary consciousness, called verily *Paramaśiva*, *Para Saṁvit*, *Caitanya*, *Cit Śakti*, *Anuttara*. Through a process of hierarchical manifestation, this Supreme Principle assumes the form of thirty-six evolutes (*tattvas*), and in this way, projects the universe of diverse objects upon Its own screen.

At the core of this universal projection, the Absolute assumes the form of the limited human experiencer. Veiling Itself with the three cloaks (*trimala*), Paramaśiva assumes self-limitation (*saṁkocana*). Yet, this contracted experience is only temporary. Through the awakening of coiled power (*kuṇḍalinī-śakti*) received in Tantric initiation (*dīkṣā*) the limited agent (*kartṛ*) internally ascends the ladder of *tattvas* and reclaims his status as the omnipotent Absolute.

Contextualizing the Text

As a guide for this voyage into the uncharted realm of Tantric practice we will follow the map drawn by Abhinavagupta in his condensed text, the *Paramārthasāra* (*PS*). In 105 *ārya-ghata* verses, this cryptic and highly codified text details the fourfold path (*upāya-catuṣṭayam*) to realization (*śivatva*).

The first English rendering of this text appeared in 1910 in an article entitled "The Paramarthasara of Abhinava-Gupta" by L. D. Barnett[1]. In the preface to this outdated yet useful translation, Barnett writes that his intention in publishing the *PS* is part of a further project in proving that the "living faith of the majority of modern Tamils is in almost every respect...the same doctrine that was taught in Kashmir about the beginning of the eleventh century by Abhinava-Gupta."[2] This argument for the connection between southern and northern Śaiva traditions is clearly strengthened by the fact that Abhinavagupta's work is based on an earlier southern text of the same name[3]. Interestingly, this sixth century text, also known as the *Ādhārakārikā* (*AKA*) is authored

1 Published in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, Parts 3-4, 1910, pp. 707-747.

2 Ibid., p. 707.

3 Barnett seems to dismiss this point and appears to miscalculate the chronological connection between the two texts by mistakenly placing Abhinavagutpa's text as historically senior. He writes: "Our *Paramārthasāra* must be distinguished from another little work of the same name.... The latter consists of seventy-nine *Āryā* verses; a considerable number of these are borrowed directly from our *Paramārthasāra*, and with them have been incorporated others, the whole work being painted over with *Vaiṣṇava* colours. Needless to say, it is valueless for the criticism of our book" [my italics].

by a Vaiṣṇava guru named Ādiśesa. Śeṣamuni, Ādhāra Bhagavān, and Śeṣanāga). That Abhinavagupta based his 10th century *Śaiva* text on this early work suggests not only that there was a shared corpus of texts between the North and South, but also a shared philosophical and practical basis among the numerous traditions then present in Kashmir.

As Silburn points out, this unifying basis was the Sāṃkhya-Yoga system. Ādiśeṣa's PS is essentially a Sāṃkhya text overlaid with Vaiṣṇava theology. It borrows the classic Sāṃkhya dualism of contentless consciousness (puruṣa) and materiality (prakṛti), while reframing it in the context of *Viśiṣṭādvaita*.

The Trika-Kaula as a Tradition of Experience (Anubhavasampradāya)

While Abhinavagupta's *PS* is clearly an adaptation of this earlier text, we would be unwise to follow Chatterji's lead in labeling it as "only the *Ādhāra-Kārikās* with a few alterations here and there."[4] In fact, only a quarter of Abhinava's 105 verses directly parallel the Ādiśeṣa text[5]. The remaining three-quarters are an expression of Abhinava's own Trika-Kaula system and have no direct counterpart in the older text[6]. For this reason Abhinava states that his purpose is not simply to transcribe the Ādhārakārikās verbatim, but to elucidate them in "accord with the tenets of Trika-Śaiva philosophy[7]."

Interestingly, taking into account the frequent double intentionality of Tantric "twilight language" (*sandhā bhāṣā*), this same verse can also be understood to mean that Abhinava has written the PS "in accord with [his] yogic intuition of Śaiva doctrine." The crucial word in the text is *dṛṣṭi* (√dṛś, "to see"). Chatterji translates it as a synonym of *darśana*, or philosophical system[8], while Barnett renders it as "mystic vision[9]." Interestingly, these are not mutually exclusive renderings, but rather equally valid and important translations of *dṛṣṭi*[10]. Taken together, they reveal an essential feature of Indian philosophy: namely, its direct relation to mystical experience (*anubhava*)[11]. In other words, in the context of Indian philosophizing, "mystic vision" is often the logical precursor to a "philosophical system"; consequently, one's own direct experience (anubhava) is a necessary and logical prerequisite to the writing of a philosophical treatise. Hence, we are to interpret Abhinavagupta's use of the word "*dṛṣṭi*" as a conscious attempt to appropriate its polyvalency. In other words, his intention is to show that his capacity to elucidate the principles of Śaiva philosophy (*darśana*) resides precisely in his own yogic perception (*dṛṣṭi*) attained through *sādhanā*.

This interpretation would clearly be in line with Abhinava's own epistemological views that direct experience (*anubhava*) forms the apex of the three-fold means of correct knowledge (*pramāṇa*), whose base is scripture (*āgama*) and the word of the guru (*yukti*)[12]. Indeed, Abhinavagupta considers Tantra to be a "tradition based on experience"(*anubhavasampradāya*)[13]. Thus, the significance of the third verse of the *PS* is not only that it establishes the text's relation to an older scripture, but, more importantly, the author's own attainment[14]. For this reason, Abhinavagupta's Trika-Kaula deserves to be viewed not solely as fuel for the fires

That Abhinavagupta based his 10th century *Śaiva* text on this early work suggests not only that there was a shared corpus of texts between the North and South, but also a shared philosophical and practical basis among the numerous traditions then present in Kashmir.

4 J. C. Chatterji, Kashmir Shaivism (Srinagar: Research and Publication Department, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, 1962), p. 10f.

5 Lilian Silburn, Le "*Paramārthasāra*", in Publications de L'Institut deCivilisation Indienne, fasc. 5. (Paris: Editions E. de Boccard, 1957), p. 20.

6 The following chart provides for a comparative study of the two texts, giving the numbers of the verses which appear to be direct adaptations.

Ādiśeṣa's PS	1	3	16	17	18	26	21	22	31	33&35	36	58	59	71	77	78	82	84	86
Abhinava's PS	1	2	6	7	8	26	29	30	34	36	37	51	52	57	70	71	84	100 & 101	102

7 Abhinavagupta, PS, v. 3:
tatsāram kathayatyābhinavaguptaḥ Śivaśāsanadṛṣṭiyogena.

8 Chatterji, p. 11f.

9 Barnett, p. 719.

10 Cf. Chandradhar Sharma, *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy* (Delhi: Motilala Banarsidass, 1976), p. 13. Sharma writes, "The word *darśana* means 'vision' and also 'the instrument of vision.' It stands for the direct, immediate and intuitive vision of Reality, the actual perception of Truth, and also includes the means which leads to this realization."

11 Cf. Swami Prabhavananda, The Spiritual Heritage of India (London: Allen and Unwin, 1962) p. 15. Prabhavananda writes: "Indian philosophy is not merely metaphysical speculation, but has its foundation in immediate perception."

12 *TĀ*, 4.77: *Yataḥ śāstrakramattajñaguruptaṁānuśilanāt / Ātmapratyayitam Jñānaṁ pūrṇatvād bhairavayat / /*

13 *PTV*, p. 161. Text quoted in *Kamalakar Mishra's Kashmir Shaivism*, The Central Philosophy of Tantrism (Massachusetts: Rudra Press, 1993), p. 5.

14 My exegesis here would be in line with Radhakrishnan's own sense of the primacy of experience. He writes, "[In Indian philosophy] the highest evidence is perception... The authoritativeness of the Śruti (scripture) is derived from the fact that it is but the expression of experience..." Indian Philosphy, 2 vols. (London: Allen and Unwin, 1971), p. 518.

of philosophical abstraction (*tarkajvāla*), but rather as a practical system "providing a viable means for the attainment of *mokṣa*[15]."

Abhinavagupta as *Adhikārin*

In the final chapters of his *Tantrāloka*, Abhinavagupta narrates the special circumstances of his birth. Desiring to parent a *siddha*, or perfected being, Abhinava's parents --Narasiṃhagupta and Vimalā --performed an esoteric ritual. Consequently, when Abhinavagupta entered the world nine months later he was viewed not as an ordinary child, but as a *yoginībhū*, a special child conceived from the union of a *siddha* and a *yoginī* during the course of Tantric ritual. Due to the extraordinary circumstances of his birth and the rich devotional environs of his childhood, Abhinava readily acquired mastery of a wide array of subjects ranging from Buddhist doctrine to Śaiva Tantra, to grammar and poetry. However, according to Abhinavagupta, the apex and culmination of learning came through his "studies" with the Kaula guru, Śambhunāth. It was from this teacher that Abhinavagupta received initiation into the esoteric Kula lineage. In this initiation he received the descent of power (*śaktipāt*) which produced a condition of embodied liberation (*jīvan-mukta*)[16].

Regardless of the authenticity of this autobiographical account, the fact that Abhinavagupta is compelled to narrate it in his magnum opus, the *TĀ*, suggests the prominent status of Tantric practice in his philosophical thought. As if compelled to justify his qualification for composing the *TĀ*, an authoritative synthesis of Tantric doctrine and practice, Abhinavagupta asserts that his authority lay in the very fact that he is quite simply a product of Tantra. Tantra is not something he learned solely from books, but is a practice which radically conditioned his birth and, later, produced his final enlightenment. In other words, in no uncertain terms Abhinava is stating, "This doctrine is not something I have thought about, it is a reality I have become." Logically, then, his emphasis is not on providing intellectual stimulation, but on transmitting his own experience and knowledge (*jñāna*). For this reason, he states clearly that his duty as a teacher is to awaken his disciples[17].

> **In fact, only a quarter of Abhinava's 105 verses directly parallel the Ādiśeṣa text. The remaining three-quarters are an expression of Abhinava's own Trika-Kaula system and have no direct counterpart in the older text.**

Ultimately, as Müller-Ortega, points out, Abhinavagupta's teachings are to be seen as a method of realization leading to a state in which one "becomes something that moves in the Heart (*hṛdayaṅgamībhūta*)[18]". This state of inner absorption is something which, as Abhinavagupta himself points out, transcends the limits of language, and for this reason, the scholar, attempting an exegesis of the Trika-Kaula, is bound to confront a serious hermeneutical obstacle. Addressing this very issue, Müller-Ortega asks rhetorically:

> Can we completely hope to understand Abhinavagupta?...[In attempting do so] [W]e immediately encounter an important and central cross-cultural perplexity. We have been using the term understand in its commonly accepted denotation: to have a thorough technical acquaintance with something. The term may be used in a stronger sense: Abhinavagupta distinguishes between an understanding that is purely intellectual, and one gained from experiential knowledge. There is an important sense in which to understand the Heart actually requires replicating the journey of return that is the tantric sādhanā: we must play Śiva's game to its most serious and hilarious conclusion, which is the unmasking of Śiva within ourselves[19].

As Müller-Ortega himself points, this type of radical understanding cannot be incorporated into the scholarly setting. However, the scholar of Tantra must be acutely sensitive to the fact that much of Tantric thought stems from and is geared towards contemplative experiences. In other words, much of Tantric thought is properly classified as mysticism. Does this mean that we should accept Frits Staal's bold assertion that to understand practice-based, mystical traditions the scholar must engage in the practice?[20] Abhinavagupta's unequivocal answer would be "yes".

15 Anantanand Rambachan, Accomplishing the Accomplished, *The Vedas as a Source of Valid Knowledge in Śaṅkara* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991), p.xi.

16 Pandey, K. C., Abhinavagupta, An Historical and Phiolosophical Study (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1963), p. 23.

17 PTV. Introduction, verse 5:
Nijaśiṣyavibodhāya prabuddhasmaraṇāya ca/
Mayābhinavaguptena śramo' yam kriyate manāk //

18 See Müller-Ortega's discussion in the Triadic Heart of Śiva, Kaula Tantricism of Abhinavagupta in the Non-dual Shaivism of Kashmir (Suny Press, Albany: New York, 1989), pps. 2, 57, 183

19 Ibid., pp. 2-3.

20 See Frits Staal's important theoretical discussions in Exploring Mysticism (Berkeley: UC Press,1975), esp. Part III "How to Study Mysticism", pp. 123-199.

However, Abhinavagupta's views would probably not fare well in the post-enlightenment environs of 20th century academia. The demand for scholarly distance and objectivity does not allow for the kind of full-body engagement that Abhinavagupta demanded of his own students. However, the equally important demand for hermeneutical accuracy necessitates a proper contextualizing of Abhinavagupta's system. In other words, although as scholars we do not have to practice *sādhanā*, we are obligated to be sensitive to the practice-based nuances of Abhinavagupta's densely coded verses.

This is not to say that philosophical inquiry has no place in the *PS*, for this is far from the truth. Abhinavagupta's stature in Indian history is primarily due to his great gift for philosophical expression. Unlike others before him, he was able to formalize the numerous esoteric streams of Tantra into a single, unified river of thought and practice. Kamalakar Mishra writes:

> Abhinavagupta presents the otherwise difficult philosophy of Tantra in a cogent and coherent way that makes the Tantric position logically and rationally acceptable. What is complex in Tantra becomes simple in his treatment; what is esoteric and mystical becomes rationally understandable[21].

The point to keep in mind is that Abhinavagupta's systematization stems from his own initiation and training in the various lineages and philosophical schools (*sampradāya*) of his time. In other words, Abhinava's philosophy is not the product of a single line of thought; rather, it is a rich synthesis of all that were accessible to him. In his person, the plethora of Tantric schools were united through the intensity of his own critical insight and practice into a single system in which the practices and philosophical views of the various schools were grouped in a hierarchy of ascending power culminating with the esoteric branch of Āgamic Tantrism known as Trika-Kaula, "The Family of the Triad"[22]. And it was this ability to unify the plurality of Śaivisms into a single doctrinal system that makes Abhinavagupta's work so intriguing. Before his time there was no single tradition. Rather, as Alper has pointed out, there was only "a series of overlapping preceptorial lines, and a plenitude of spiritual techniques available to each teacher."[23] Hence, it was through Abhinavagupta's teachings that these numerous techniques and lineages were subsumed within a larger theoretical framework which embraced them all. And it is this carefully crafted framework that is now commonly referred to as Kashmir Śaivism[24]. Although, historically speaking, there never was a Kashmir Shaivism, the fact that scholars now look at the traditions of Kashmir as a unified whole is due largely to Abhinavagupta (perhaps, then, the appropriate term would be "Abhinavagupta-ism"). For this reason, a text like the *Paramārthasāra* reveals the brilliance and depth of Abhinavagupta's systematization. It enables us to unpack the many levels of teachings and techniques which he received and thereby appreciate the way in which he fuses them into a single Tantric "river"[25].

The point to keep in mind is that Abhinavagupta's systematization stems from his own initiation and training in the various lineages and philosophical schools (*sampradāya*) of his time. In other words, Abhinava's philosophy is not the product of a single line of thought; rather, it is a rich synthesis of all that were accessible to him.

The following pages serve as introduction to the PS. They are intended to guide the reader through the philosophical streams that Abhinavagupta himself traveled with the aim of showing how he perceived each of these streams as eventually united in a larger river en route to radical freedom. The key to successfully charting this voyage lies in identifying the *PS* as a map for sādhanā or spiritual practice. This text's purpose, as Abhinavagupta clearly states, is to guide the aspirant through ascending levels of consciousness until there is the realization of one's identity with Supreme Truth (*paramārtha*). It is along route to this final destination that Tantric aspirant, or *sādhaka*, ontologically encounters the various philosophical systems as inner states of being. In other words, in the initial stages of *sādhanā*, when one's consciousness is still mired by dualistic thought patterns (*dvaitavikalpa*), the teachings of the dualistic scriptures (*dvaitāgama*) are necessary. However, as one advances in *sādhanā*, one's

21 Op. cit., Mishra, p. 45.

22 See Dyczkowski (1987) for further discussion: *The Doctrine of Vibration, An Analysis of the Doctrines and Practices of Kashmir Shaivism* (Albany: SUNY Press) pp. 5-14.

23 Harvey Alper, "*Śiva and the Ubiquity of Consciousness: the Spaciousness of an Artful Yogi.*" Journal of Indian Philosophy 7 (1979): note 1, p. 386.

24 See Gerald Larson's insightful discussion on the issue of "ism" in his review of Kashmir Shaivism by L. N. Sharma in Philosophy East and West 28 (April 1978): 236-239. There, Larson points out that the Śaivism of Kashmir should not be viewed as a single unit, but rather as a "network of esoteric tantric practices, a network of theories concerning language and aesthetics, a network of philosophies for attaining discrimination, and a plurality of 'paths' for attaining mokṣa." Despite the efforts of Larson and others to highlight the inaccuracies inherent in the use of the term "Kashmir Shaivism", it is still in vogue with many important scholars. Take, for example, the title of Kamalaka Mishra's recent book: *Kashmir Shaivism: The Central Philosophy of Tantrism.*

25 See Dyczkowski's excellent synthesis of this "river" in *The Doctrine of Vibration, An Analysis of the Doctrines and Practices of Kashmir Shaivism* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987), pp. 12-13.

internal ascension is paralleled externally by initiation (*dīkṣā*) into scriptural traditions which proclaim to grant states of non-dual awareness. Hence, in the external world there is a plurality of teachings and spiritual techniques. Yet, in the inner life of the *sādhaka* these distinctions are fused in a process of internal bodily ascension.

To understand the mechanisms of this ascension we must first come to grips with the central philosophical systems embedded in the *PS* and the principle tenets which undergird Abhinavagupta's thought. Constructing these tenets as our boat, we will then be ready to explore the turbulent waters of *sādhanā* which Abhinavagupta charts in the latter third of the *PS*.

The Tantric Streams

Abhinavagupta's Tantric river-system is a careful re-channeling of four scriptural streams. One stream is the more ancient system of Āgamic Śaivism, itself fed by three smaller tributaries based, respectively, on dualism (*dvaita*), dual-cum-non-dualism (*dvaitādvaita*), and non-dualism (*advaita*). A second stream is the Pratyabhijñā which seems to receive its current from both the Āgamic waters, and from the philosophical tributaries of Vedānta. The third stream, the Spanda, is similar to the Pratyabhijñā, in that while its source is the Āgamas it then branches off on a different course before being redirected by Abhinavagupta. The fourth stream appears to be fed both not only by the Āgamas, but from various sources ranging from Tamil Nādu in the South to Nepal in the North. This is the Kaula tradition with its emphasis on radical antinomian practices (called "left-handed", *vāmācāra*) as a means to immediate salvation. Of the many Kaula streams, there are two that flowed directly into Abhinavagupta's system, the goddess-centered cults of the Krama and the Trika. Apparently, Abhinavagupta experienced the Kaula waters as the most rapid, for he claimed the Kaula to be the pinnacle of all traditions. And of the many streams which fed the Kaula system, he saw Trika as the greatest. In his words, Trika was to the Kaula as fragrance to a rose--its finest essence[26]. Hence, Abhinavagupta proclaimed his philosophy to be Trika-Kaulism. In truth, however, his was a much larger river of thought which arose from the merging of the Kaula with the currents of the Āgama, Pratyabhijñā, and Spanda streams.

> **A text like the *Paramārthasāra* reveals the brilliance and depth of Abhinavagupta's systematization. It enables us to unpack the many levels of teachings and techniques which he received and thereby appreciate the way in which he fuses them into a single Tantric "river".**

Commencing the Journey

Nature of the Absolute

The opening verse of the *PS* crystallizes the Trika Śaivas' paradoxical conception of the Śiva, the Trika-Kaula Absolute. Here, Abhinavagupta honors Śiva as the "one without beginning" who "dwells manifoldly in secret places" as "the receptacle of all.[27]" In other words, for the Kaśmirī Tāntrikas the Absolute is simultaneously one and many. Endowed with unlimited power (*śakti*) the Supreme Principle can manifest itself infinitely without losing its essential unity. For this reason, the universe, though appearing divided, is really only the flashing forth (*ābhāsa*) of the One. Abhinavagupta writes (PS 4-5):

> This sphere (*aṇḍa*, cosmic egg) ...is brought forth by the Lord through the bestowal of his innate power and might. This universe with its succession of manifold bodies, organs and worlds is within these spheres; and therein is the enjoyer, the embodied Śiva who assumes the condition of creatures.

In other words Śiva contains within Himself the ability to manifest distinctions within unity (*bhedābheda*). Yet, just as a crystal remains untainted by the various hues it adopts, so the Absolute remains one despite its appearance in the form of "gods, humans, animals, and plant-life" (*PS*, 6).

The process of universal manifestation is elaborately explained by the Trika system through the doctrine of the thirty-six evolutes or *tattva*s. The supreme reality--variously called *Paramaśiva*, *Para Saṁvit*, *Caitanya*--is pure consciousness beyond the sphere of manifestation. In reference to its transcendent-ness Abhinavagupta refers to the Absolute as the "thirty-seventh *tattva*" in the *TĀ*[28]. Yet, this transcendent principle is also the ocean of consciousness out of which creation arises. For unlike the Vedāntic conception of *Brahman* as static

26 *TĀ* 1.304a. Translated by Alexis Sanderson in "*Maṇḍala and Āgamic Identity in the Trika of Kashmir*" in *Mantras et Diagrammes Rituels Dans L'Hinduisme* (Paris: Editions du CNRS, 1986), p. 181.

27 *PS, 1: paraṁ parasthaṁ gahanād anādim/ ekaṁ niviṣṭaṁ bahudhā guhāsu/ sarvālayaṃ sarvacarācarasthaṃ tvāmeva Śambhuṃ śaraṇam prapadye / /*

28 *TĀ* 15.295c-328b. Translated by Sanderson (1986), op. cit., p. 187.

consciousness, the Trika Śaiva absolute embodies both consciousness (*caitanya*) and dynamism or *spanda śakti*. Acting as an inner pulse, the spanda śakti unfolds the universe of *tattva*s within the body of the absolute (*PS*, 10). Hence, in the Trika schema, the transcendent contains the manifest. And even during the time of cosmic manifestation, the supreme principle (para-tattva) remains "free of delusion, pure, peaceful and beyond creation and dissolution" (*PS*, 11).

This capacity for internal self-manifestation is explained through a dialectic of illumination and reflection (*prakāśa/vimarśa*). Indeed, the Absolute is characterized as being endowed with these two principle (*prakāśa-vimarśa-śakti*). The Absolute embodies not only an illuminating consciousness, but also a reflective capacity for self-knowledge which plays out on all levels of manifestation. At the cosmogonic level, *prakāśa* is the first *tattva*, the *Śivatattva*, and *vimarśa* is the second, the *Śaktitattva*. These two, Śiva and Śakti, are understood to be the Lord (*Īśvara*) and his consort, *Devī*. In Tantric cosmogonic schemes the union of Śiva and Śakti gives rise to creation; and in a philosophical context the union of these two principles is the fusing of a knowing agent (*pramātṛ*) with the means of knowing (*pramāṇa*) which necessitates the need for a source of objective knowledge (*prameya*). Hence, in cosmogonic terms the *prameya* is the very universe itself, for the product of the union of Śiva and Śakti, *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*, *pramātṛ* and *pramāṇa*, is the additional thirty-four *tattva*s which form the basis of objective manifestation.

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The key to understanding Trika-Kaula discourse is to realize that the *prakāśa-vimarśa* dialectic plays out on all levels of reality. Another way to say this is that each of the lower *tattva*s incorporates within itself those *tattva*s that precede it. Hence, even the lowest *tattva*s, the elemental substances (*pañca-mahābhūta*), contain within themselves those at the higher level. Hence, the principle of illumination (*prakāśa*) and self-reflection (*vimarśa*) are present at all levels of creation. In other words, all objects (*prameya*s) are constituted of *prakāśa* and *vimarśa* and for this reason Abhinavagupta claims that the knower, the means of knowing, and the object known comprise a triune Self. And for this reason the Tantras state that there is nothing which is not Śiva[29]. Hence, the world itself, when properly understood becomes a basis for mystical realization. Indeed, the higher states of *sādhanā* are said to consist in the awareness that the world itself is comprised of the bliss experienced in yogic *samādhi*[30].

Abhinavagupta gives a potent metaphor for this extrovertive *samādhi* in his comparison of the relationship of the universe to the absolute with that of reflected images to a mirror:

> Just as the images of a town, a village, and other objects reflected in a mirror appear inseparable from the mirror yet appear distinct both from one another and from the mirror, in the same way, arising from the absolute consciousness of *Para Bhairava*, this universe, though inherently void of divisions, nevertheless appears internally apportioned and distinct [from *Para Bhairava*] (*PS*, 12-13).

In this crucial metaphor there are three important elements: the objects (*nagaragrāmādi*), the reflections, and the mirror itself (*darpaṇa*). The relationship between them reveals both the fundamental principles of *prakāśa* and *vimarśa* and the key to understanding Śaiva yoga. The mirror itself is Śiva, or pure illumination (*prakāśa*). Possessing within itself the capacity for revelation (*vimarśa*), the mirror contains a variety of reflected images. In terms of epistemology, these images are the *prameya*. The fact of their reflection, which is the means of their being perceived--hence, known--, is the *pramāṇa*, and the mirror is the metaphorical knower (*pramātṛ*).

Now, what is the relationship between the three? The answer to this question is more nuanced then it first appears. On a surface level, the reflected images appear distinct both from one another and from the mirror. In other words, according to conventional reality, one would consider the knower, the known, and means of knowing all distinct. However, as Abhinavagupta states, conventional understanding has no basis at the level of the Supreme Truth (*PS*, 27). For his reason, the true relation of the three is stated to be one of inseparability (*avibhāgin*). Developing this theme of inseparability, Abhinavagupta goes on to equate the mirror with the

29 *Svacchanda Tantram: Na Śivam vidyate kvacit.*
30 *ŚSū 1.19: Lokānanda samādhi sukham.*

absolute consciousness of highest Bhairava (*vimalatama-parama-bhairava-bodhaḥ*) who, both in terms of the metaphor and Trika cosmology, is the supreme knower (*pramātṛ*).

Now, what is the relationship between Bhairava and the universe? Abhinavagupta answers that despite the appearance of being mutually apportioned and distinct (*vibhaktamābhāti*), the relationship of Bhairava (*pramātṛ*) to the universe (*prameya*) and its reflection (*pramāṇa*)--like that of the mirror to its objects--is one void of distinctions (*vibhāgaśūnyam*). In other words, from the highest perspective, the trinity of epistemological and cosmological principles is a unity. Like the various forms of candy which are but modifications of syrup, these three are but modifications of the Supreme Self (*PS*, 26).

Bondage and Embodiment

The purpose (*prayojana*) for writing the *PS* is clearly established by Abhinavagupta in the third verse where he explains that his treatise (*śāstra*) is written in response to the pleas of a disciple caught in the "wheel of suffering which begins with dwelling in the womb and ends with death." Living in a universe which is inherently devoid of distinctions, being the self-manifestation of omnipotent consciousness, how then can there be an occasion for bondage? Abhinavagupta answers that this condition paradoxically arises as the result of the absolute's power of freedom (*svātantrya-śakti*). In other words, it is precisely because Paramaśiva is unbounded that He/She/It can assume the condition of bondage.

In terms of cosmic emanation, the cause of bondage arises at the level of the sixth *tattva* (*māyā-tattva*). At this level, Consciousness is said to assume the capacity of self-limitation (*saṁkocana*) which makes possible the appearance of duality and multiplicity. The *māyā-tattva* is itself composed of five sheaths (*kañcuka*s) which limit the functioning of the five powers (*pañca-śakti*) of the Pure Order (*śuddhādhvan*) (*PS*, 16). What results is the formation of the 'three taints' (*trimala*) which encase consciousness and transform it into a limited soul (*PS*, 24).

This limited soul is the twelfth principle, the *puruṣa-tattva*. In verse sixteen Abhinavagupta refers to the *puruṣa* as a "fettered beast" who, due to the influence of *māyā*, has contracted from the condition of pure consciousness (*bodhaḥ*) to that of a tainted soul (*malinas*). At this level of the cosmic hierarchy, the Supreme Self, "due to Its associations with the darkness of ignorance comes to perceive Itself as a wondrous diversity of subjects and objects." In other words, at the level of the *puruṣa-tattva*, there is a perceived split between self and other.

And at this stage there unfolds the twenty-four material categories of the classical Sāṁkhya schema, beginning with *prakṛti* and progressing through the threefold psychic instrument (*antaḥkaraṇaṃ*)--intellect (*buddhi*), ego (*ahaṁkāra*), and mind (*manas*)--, the organs of knowledge (*buddhīndriya*)--the ear (*śrotra*), the skin (*tvak*) the eye (*cakṣus*), the tongue (*rasanā*), and the nose (*ghrāṇa*)--, the organs of action (*karmendrīya*)--speech (*vāk*), hands (*pāṇi*), feet (*pāda*), anus (*payu*) generative organ (*upasthaṃ*)--, the five subtle elements (*tanmātrā*)--sound (*śabda*), touch (*sparśa*), color (*mahas*), taste (*rasa*) and smell (*gandha*)--, and, lastly, the physical sphere (*sthūla viṣayas*) constituted by the five material elements (*pañca-mahābhūtas*)--sky (*nabhas*), wind (*pavanas*), fire (*tejas*) water (*salilaṁ*) and earth (*pṛthvī*) (*PS*, 19-22).

The result of this process is that consciousness takes the form of a body (*dehabhāva*) (*PS*, 23). In other words, according to the Trika, the final result of cosmic manifestation is embodiment. Hence, in this system, the body is both the product of creation and the receptacle of manifestation itself. Hence, the body contains within itself each of the thirty-six *tattva*s, and for this reason reflects the structure of the universe[31]. Consequently, the *tattva* schema is to be understood simultaneously as a map of the universe and of the human being--the two, in Tantric circles, being inseparable[32].

As we will see above, in the practices of Trika *sādhanā* the homologies between the universe and the body play out on several levels. According to Abhinavagupta's Śaivism the body itself is not the cause of bondage. It is the final product of Paramaśiva's expansive power (*unmeśa-śakti*). The true source of bondage is the malas which encase the finite soul (*puruṣa*, *aṇu*) in ignorance (*avidyā*) and create the experience of cyclical existence or *saṃsāra*. In such a condition, the limited soul, "like a spider with its web, spins for itself a variegated pattern by means of association with the body, breath, perception, thought, knowledge and the expanse of ether" (*PS*, 32). In other words, while governed by the *mala*s, the *tattva*s are an apparent source of bondage:

> When the multitude of *tattva*s are unagitated the Lord likewise appears still; likewise is He exited when they are so and bewildered when there is the state of bewilderment. However, in

31 The most detailed discussion of the correspondences between the universe and the body is found in Gavin Flood's recent work, *Body and Cosmology in Kashmir Śaivism* (San Francisco: Mellen University Press, 1993), esp. chapter 5 "Structures of the Body", pp. 159-190.

32 Cf. Dimock's discussion of microcosm/macrocosm correspondences in *The Place of the Hidden Moon, Erotic Mysticism in the Vaiṣṇava-Sahajīya Cult of Bengal* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), On page 137 Dimock writes: "The essence of Tāntric thought is that man is a microcosm. He contains within himself all the elements of the universe; he is a part that contains all the elements of the whole."

> actuality, from the [perspective of the] Highest Truth He is not these conditions (*PS*, 38).

The last line of the above verse is key to understanding the Trika conception of bondage. It suggests, that ultimately, the entire notion of limitation is a cosmic joke, or play (*līlā*). In the final analysis, Śiva is never bound, and in the moment of this re-cognition (*pratyabhijñā*), the sādhaka is awakened. At that point the body becomes the temple of god (*devagṛha*) and delusion is shattered. Then, there is the condition of embodied liberation (*jīvan-mukta*). Hence, for the Trika śaivite, death is not a prerequisite for final release (*videha-mukta*)[33]. Knowledge alone is necessary, for in the moment of awakening there is the understanding that Śiva alone unfolds the drama of bondage and release:

> He (the *sādhaka*) would free his own Self from bondage by means of the splendor of the greatness of self-knowledge. Thus, the Supreme Śiva unfolds the drama consisting of the wonders of bondage and liberation. (*PS*, 33).

Paradoxically, this moment of re-cognition, this condition of knowing, often requires ritual practices (*karman*) to produce a condition of purification in which pure knowledge can arise. Consequently, the Trika *sādhanā* system enjoins the combining of knowledge and action (*jñānakarmasamuccayavāda*) as a means to freedom.

In defense of this position, the Trika defines the absolute as constituted of a triadic power: will (*icchā*), knowledge (*jñāna*), and action (*kriyā*).

The Dimensions of *Sādhanā*

Trika theology describes this world as the self-manifestation of an omnipotent and dynamic consciousness. Logically, then, as we have seen, bondage is an impossibility, an illusion or mirage. Yet, there is the experience of suffering and consequently the need for a method (*upāya*) which brings about the dissolving of the mirage of ignorance. Herein, enters the essential features of Tantra --an elaborate technology of self-release based on an acute science of the body (*dehavidyā*). Within this system abstract philosophical inquiry, as found in the initial sections of the *PS*, forms part of the means to liberating knowledge (*jñāna*)[34]. In other words, descriptions of the *tattva*s, the nature of the cosmogonic process, etc., serve not only to satisfy intellectual curiosities but, finally to produce an existential awakening and release. And this condition, the Tantras declare, requires "active ritual participation leading the aspirant to experiential knowledge (*bhāvanajñāna*)[35]."

Hence, for the initiated *sādhaka*, the *PS* is to be understood not as representing a philosophical stance to be agreed or disagreed with, but as a guideline for acquiring experiential knowledge that was disseminated within guarded circles of initiation and secrecy. Initiation (*dīkṣā*) was understood to be the *sine qua non* of proper textual exegesis, since it was only through this consecration that the *mala*s could be removed. Through *dīkṣā* came the descent of power (*śaktipāt*) which made possible the revelation of the Self. "As the face is revealed in a spotless mirror," writes Abhinavagupta, "so This (Self) is revealed as light in the mind purified by *śaktipāt* (*PS*, 9)."

This initiatory transmission was believed to awaken the aspirant's own dormant power, the *kuṇḍalinī śakti*, which, when awakened arose through the central current (*suṣumnā nāḍi*), purifying the latent tendencies (*saṃskāras*) and uniting the *sādhaka*'s limited identity with that of cosmic identity situated at the crown of the head in the *sahāsrāra*. This path of internal ascension was called the upward yoga (*udmukhyayoga*) and was considered the distinctive feature of the Kaula school. In mythological terms, the upward path was the upward face of Śiva's five-faced icon (*pañca-mukha-liṅga*). This path removed all ignorance and established the *sādhaka* in the highest state of empowerment through the shredding of the *mala*s:

> As the chaff surrounding the rice grain seems inseparable and yet is removed, so this (=the *trimala*) is shed by the upward yoga of the path of Śaivism (*PS*, 18).

For one to enter the path of upwards yoga, the essential prerequisite was the meeting with a qualified master (*satguru*). Contact with the teacher was understood to produce an alchemical process of transformation which liberated the disciple from all impurities (*PS*, 17). Under rare circumstances, the empowerment received from the guru was so intense (*atītivraśaktipāta*) it would produce instant enlightenment and the *sādhaka* would become "Śiva Himself" (*PS*, 96). More often, however, liberation occurred gradually (*kramamukti*) through "ascending the steps of the latter [of *tattva*s]" (*PS*, 97).

For a fuller understanding of this process of ascension one must turn to other texts. In particular, the *TĀ* describes the path to liberation as a fourfold means (*upāyacatuṣṭayam*) in which external techniques correspond to the *sādhaka*'s own internal state of development.

33 See SenSharma's excellent analysis of jīvan-mukta vs. videha-mukta in *The Philosophy of Sādhanā* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1990), pp. 67-68.
34 See Brook's discussion of the interrelation of philosophy and practice in his *Secret of the Three Cities, An Introduction to Hindu Śākta Tantrism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), esp. 49.
35 Ibid, p. 49.

English translation of The Essence of the Supreme Truth Paramārthasāra

Om, Om. Salutations to Śiva, the ever-favorable, inherently benevolent, Supreme Auspiciousness

Oṃ Oṃ namaḥ Śivāya, Śadāśivāya, saśivāya Paramaśivāya//

1. To you, the supreme standing beyond the abyss (=*Māyā*), the one without beginning, dwelling manifoldly in secret places (= 'the heart'), the receptacle of all, abiding in all that moves and moves not—to you, Śambhu, I come seeking refuge.

Paraṃ parasthaṃ gahanād anādim ekaṃ niviṣṭhaṃ bahudhā guhāsu / sarvālayaṃ sarvacarācarasthaṃ tvāmeva Śambhuṃ śaraṇam prapadye // 1

2. A disciple, wandering dazed in the wheel of suffering which begins with dwelling in the womb and ends with death, beseeched the Lord, the substratum, regarding liberation.

Garbhādhivāsapūrvakamaraṇāntaduḥkhacakra-vibhrāntaḥ / ādhāra³ bhagavantaṃ śiœyaḥ papraccha paramārtham // 2

3. The Guru answered him with the Verses on the Foundation, the essence of which Abhinavagupta here narrates in accord with [his] yogic intuition of Śaiva doctrine.

Ādhārakārikābhiḥ taṃ gurur abhibhāœati sma tatsāraṃ / kathayatya abhinavaguptaḥ śivaśāsanadṛṣṭiyogena // 3

4. This sphere, which is distributed in a quaternary as Śakti, Māyā, Prakṛti, and Pṛthvī, is brought forth by the Lord through the bestowal of his innate power and might.

Nijaśaktivaibhavabharād aṇḍacatuṣṭhayam idaṃ vibhāgena / Śaktirmāyā prakṛtiḥ pṛthvī ceti prabhāvitaṃ prabhuṇā // 4

5. This universe with its succession of manifold bodies, organs and worlds is within these spheres; and therein is the enjoyer, the embodied Śiva who assumes the condition of animals.

Tatrāntar viśvam idaṃ vicitratanukaraṇabhuvanasaṃtānam / bhoktā ca tatra dehī Śiva eva gṛhītapaśubhāvaḥ // 5

6. As the clear crystal assumes a multi-colored form, so the Lord assumes the form of gods, men, animals and plant-life.

Nānāvidhavarṇānām rūpam dhatte yathāmala° spha»hika° / suramānuœapaśupādaparūpatva³ tadvad īśo'pi // 6

7. As the orb of the moon [appears] to move in disturbed water, and likewise [appears] motionless in still water, so this Self, the great Lord [is reflected] in the unceasing flow of bodies, organs and worlds.

Gacchati gacchati jala iva himakarabimbaṃ sthite sthitiṃ yāti / tanukaraṇabhuvanavarge tathāyamātmā Maheśānaḥ // 7

8. Just as Rāhu, though invisible, becomes manifest when standing in the orb of the moon, so this all-pervasive [hence, invisible] Self [is revealed] in the mirror of intelligence through engagement in the sense-spheres.

Rāhur adṛśyo' pi yathā śaśibimbasthaḥ prakāśate tadvat / sarvagato' pyayam ātmā viṣayāśrayaṇena dhīmakure // 8

9. As the face is revealed in a spotless mirror so This (Self) is revealed as light in the mind (lit., 'Intelligent Principle') purified by *śaktipāta.*

Ādarśe malarahite yadvad vadana³ vibhāti tadvad ayam / Śivaśaktipātavimale dhītattve bhāti bhārūpaḥ // 9

10-11. The universe consisting of the thirty-six *tattvas* shines in that Supreme Principle which is the form of light, completely full, reposed in its own self, of great bliss, perfect by means of will, consciousness and instrumentality, replete with endless power, free of delusion, pure, peaceful and free from creation and dissolution.

Bhārūpaṃ paripūrṇaṃ svātmani viśrāntito mahānandam / icchāsaṃvitkaraṇair nirbharitam anantaśaktipariūrṇam // 10 Sarvavikalpavihīnaṃ śuddhaṃ śāntaṃ layodayavihīnam / yat paratattvaṃ tasmin vibhāti ṣaṭatriṃśadātma jagat // 11

12-13. Just as the images of a town, a village, and other objects reflected in a mirror are inseperable from it and yet appear distinct both from one other and from the mirror, in the same way, arising from the absolute consciousness of Para Bhairava, this universe, though inherently void of divisions,

nevertheless appears internally apportioned and distinct [from Para Bhairava].

Darpaṇabimbe yadvan nagaragrāmādi citram avibhāgi /
bhāti vibhāgenaiva ca parasparaṃ darpaṇād api ca / / 12
Vimalatamaparamabhairavabodhāt tadvad vibhāgaśūnyamapi /
anyonyaṃ ca tato' pi ca vibhaktamābhāti jagad etat / / 13

14. By means of the distinct nature of the five powers, He (Bhairava) reveals the condition of Śiva, Śakti, and Sadāśiva as well as the principle *tattva* composed of lordship and knowledge.

Śivaśaktisadāśivatām īśvaravidyāmayīṃ ca tattvadaśām /
śaktīnāṃ pañcānāṃ vibhaktabhāvena bhāsayati / / 14

15. This veil of Śiva is the supreme spontaneity, capable of all accomplishments; it is Māyā, the divine power of the Great Lord.

Paramaṃ yat svātantryaṃ durghaṭasaṃpādanaṃ Maheśya /
Devī māyāśaktiḥ svātmāvaraṇaṃ Śivasyaitat / / 15

16. Consciousness, from the influence of possession by Māyā, becomes the tainted soul, the fettered beast. This union is from the powers of time, restriction, and determination under the influence of passion and ignorance.

Māyāparigrahavaśād bodho malinaḥ pumān paśur bhavati /
kālakalāniyatibalād rāgāvidyāvaśena saṃbaddhaḥ / / 16

17. Now (*kāla*) this (*niyati*) is something (*kalā*) I know (*vidyā*) completely (*rāga*): this hexad of cloaks which includes Māyā is known as the interior organ of the finite soul.

Adhunaiva kiṃcid evedam eva sarvātmanaiva jānāmi /
māyāsahitaṃ kañcukaṣaṭhkam aṇor antarañgam idam uktam / / 17

18. As the chaff surrounding the rice grain seems inseparable and yet is removed, so this (*kañcuka*) is shed by the upward yoga (=the *Kaula Mārga*) of Śiva's Path.

Kambukam iva taṇḍulakaṇavinivisṭhaṃ bhinnam apy abhidā /
bhajate tat tu viśuddhiṃ Śivamārgaunmukhyayogena / / 18

19. Nature, constituted by pleasure, pain and delusion, is the inner organ consisting of resolution, will and conceit which correspond respectively to intellect, mind and ego.

Sukhaduḥkhamohamātraṃ niścayasaṅkalpanābhimānāś ca /
prakṛtir athāntaḥkaraṇaṃ buddhimanohaṅkṛtikramaśaḥ / / 19

20. The ear, skin, eye, tongue and nose are the organs of the intellect in respect to sound (and the other corresponding elements); and speech, hands, feet, anus and the generative organ are the organs of action.

Śrotraṃ tvagakṣirasanāghrāṇaṃ buddhīndriyāṇi śabdādau /
vākpāṇipādapāyupasthaṃ karmendriyāṇi punaḥ / / 20

21. The sphere grasped by these (=sense organs), which would be subtle and without division, consist in the five subtle elements—sound, touch, color, taste, and smell.

Eṣām grāhyo viṣayaḥ sūkṣmaḥ pravibhāgavarjito yaḥ syāt /
tanmātrapañcakaṃ tac chabdaḥ sparśo maho raso gandhaḥ / / 21

22. From the mixture of these comes the gross sphere which consists in the *pañca mahābhūtas* (five elements)—sky, wind, fire, water, and earth.

Etatsaṃsargavaśāt sthūlo viṣayas tu bhūtapañcakatām /
abhyeti nabhaḥ pavanas tejaḥ salilaṃ ca pṛthvī ca / / 22

23. As the chaff covers the rice-grain so this creation beginning with Prakṛti and ending with Pṛthvī adorns consciousness in embodiment.

Tuṣa iva taṇḍulakaṇikām āvṛṛute prakṛtipūrvakaḥ sargaḥ /
pṛthvīparyanto 'yam caitanyaṃ dehabhāvena / / 23

24. Regarding defilement, there is a supreme veil (*āṇava mala*), a subtle veil (*māyīya mala*) consisting of the five *kañcukas* and *māyā*, and a gross, external veil (*karma mala*) in the form of the body. In this way the Self is enveloped by a triadic sheath.

Param āvaraṃ mala iha sūkṣmaṃ māyādikañcukaṃ sthūlaṃ /
bāhyaṃ vigraharūpaṃ kośatrayaveṣṭhito hy ātmā / / 24

25. From Its association with the darkness of ignorance, the Self, though its own self-nature is non-dual, comes to perceive itself as a wondrous diversity of subjects and objects.

Ajñānatimirayogād ekam api svasvabhāvam ātmānam /
grāhyagrāhakanānāvaicitryeṇāvabudhyeta / / 25

26. As syrup, molasses, candied sugar, sugar balls and hard candy, etc. are all juice of the sugar cane, so the plurality of conditions are all of Śambhu, the Supreme Self.

Rasaphāṇitaśarkarikāguḍakhaṇḍādyā yathekṣurasa eva /
tadvad avasthābhedāḥ sarve paramātmanaḥ Śambhoḥ / / 26

27. The various philosophies—Yogācāra, Vedānta, Sāṃkhya-Yoga, Upaniṣads, Nyāya, Smārta—are limited to conventional reality. They have no existence in the Highest Truth.

Vijñānāntararyāmiprāṇavirāḍdehajātipiṇḍāntāḥ /
vyavahāramātram etat paramārthena tu na santy eva / / 27

28. There is no snake in the rope, yet [this false perception] creates a deathly fear. This great power of delusion cannot be easily asundered.

Rajjvāṃ nāsti bhujaṅgas trāsaṃ kurute ca mṛtyuparyantam /
bhrānter mahatī śaktirna vivektuṃ śakyate nāma / / 28

29. In the same way, merit, demerit, heaven, hell, birth, death, happiness, pain, caste and such things as the stages of life all arise in the Self due to the power of delusion.

Tadvad dharmādharmasvarnirayotpattimaraṇasukhaduḥkham /
varṇāśramādi cātmanyasad api vibhramabalād bhavati / / 29

30. It is blindness when there is the erroneous identification of "not-Self" regarding states of being [which ought to be recognized as] indistinct from the Self due to their being pervaded by light.

Etat tad andhakāraṃ yad bhāveṣu prakāśamānatayā /
ātmānatirikteṣv api bhavaty anātmābhimāno 'yam / / 30

31. Moreover, it is a darkness from a darkness, a great boil upon a cyst when that which is not-Self, such as the body, breath, etc., is imagined as the Self.

Timirād api timiram idaṃ gaṇḍasyopari mahān ayaṃ sphoṭhaḥ /
yad anātmany api dehaprāṇādāv ātmamānitvam / / 31

32. Like a spider with its web, [the finite soul (*aṇu*)] spins for itself a variegated pattern by means of association with the body, breath, perception, thought, knowledge and the expanse of ether.

Dehaprāṇavimarśanadhījñānanabhaḥprapañcayogena /
ātmānaṃ veṣṭhayate citraṃ jālena jālakāra iva / / 32

33. He would free his own Self from bondage by means of the method of the splendor of the greatness of self-knowledge. Thus, the supreme Śiva unfolds the drama consisting of the wonders of bondage and liberation.

Svajñānavibhavabhāsanayogenodveṣṭhayen nijātmānam /
iti bandhamokṣacitrāṃ krīdāṃ pratanoti Paramaśivaḥ / / 33

34. It is in Him, the fourth abode, that creation, maintenance, and destruction [as well as] waking, dreaming, and deep sleep all appear. However, He [the Self] does not reveal Himself while veiled by these [diverse conditions].

Sṛṣṭisthitisaṃhārā jāgratsvapnau suṣuptam iti tasmin /
bhānti turīye dhāmani tathāpi tair āvṛtaṃ bhāti / / 34

35. Due to differentiation the waking is the universe; due to the majesty of light, dreaming is illumination; due to the Knowledge Mass, deep sleep is understanding; beyond that is the fourth.

Jāgrad viśvam bhedāt svapnas tejaḥ prakāśamāhātmyat /
prājñaḥ svapnāvasthā jñānaghanatvāt tataḥ paraṃ turyam / / 35

36. As the surface of the sky is unsoiled by clouds, smoke, and dust, so the Supreme Self is untouched by the modifications of Māyā.

Jaladharadhūmarajobhir malinīkriyate yathā na gaganatalam /
tadvan māyāvikṛtibhir aparāmṛṣṭhaḥ paraḥ puruṣaḥ / / 36

37. When the space in one jar is pervaded by dust the others are not thereby defiled. So it is with these souls which undergo differentiation by suffering and joy.

Ekasmin ghaṭagagane rajasā vyāpte bhavanti nānyāni /
malināni tadvad ete jīvaḥ sukhaduḥkhabhedajuṣaḥ / / 37

38. When the multitude of *tattva*s are unagitated the Lord likewise appears still; likewise is He exited when they are so and bewildered when there is the state of bewilderment. However, in actuality, from the [perspective of the] Highest Truth He is not these conditions (*tathā*).

Śānte śānta ivāyaṃ hṛṣṭhe hṛṣṭho vimohavati mūḍhaḥ /
tattvagaṇe sati bhagavān na punaḥ paramārthataḥ sa tathā / / 38

39. Having first removed the appearance of that form [the Self] in that which is not-Self, the Supreme Self then shatters the false perception of the not-Self in that which is the Self.

Yad anātmani tadrūpāvabhāsanaṃ tat purā nirākṛtya /
ātmany anātmarūpāṃ bhrāntiṃ vidalayati paramātma / / 39

40. When this dyad of error is thus cut out at the roots, the supreme *yogin*, having accomplished his aim, is then no longer burdened by societal injunctions.

□ tthaṃ vibhramayugalakasamūlavicchedane kṛtārthasya /

kartavyāntarakalanā jātu na parayogino bhavati / / 40

41. Thus from the power of meditation on non-duality, this triad—earth, nature and illusion—having ascended from the form of objective knowledge, becomes the remnant of mere Being.

Pṛthivī prak. tir māyā tritayam idaṃ vedyarūpatāpatitam /
advaitabhāvanabalād bhavati hi sanmātrapariśeṣam / / 41

42. Just as through the rejection of duality a necklace, earring and bracelet are seen as gold, so when there is the abandoning of distinction everything appears as Truth alone.

Raśanākuṇḍalakaṭhakaṃ bhedatyāgena dṛśyate yathā hema /
tadvadbhedatyāge sanmātraṃ sarvam ābhāti / / 42

43. This is the Supreme Brahman: pure, peaceful, innately non-dual, undifferentiated, complete, deathless Truth, abiding in that Śakti whose form is sheer effulgence.

Tadbrahmaparaṃ śuddhaṃ śāntaṃ abhedātmakaṃ samaṃ sakalam /
amṛtaṃ satyaṃ Śaktau viśrāmyati bhāsvarūpāyām / / 43

44. On the other hand, what is untouched by the Self-luminosity composed of will, knowledge, and action thus transits into the condition of a sky-lower (i.e., is merely imagination).

Iṣyata iti vedyata iti saṃpādyata iti ca bhāsvarūpeṇa /
aparāmṛṣṭhaṃ yadapi tu nabhaḥprasūnatvam abhyeti / / 44

45. By means of the attainment of the trident of powers (*para*, *parāpara*, and *apara*) the totality is emitted by the god of gods named Śiva within the Supreme Lord, the Supreme Truth.

Śaktitriśūlaparigamayogena samastamapi Parameśe /
Śivanāmani paramārthe visṛjyate devadevena / / 45

46. And on the other hand, through the successive emanation of the five powers outwards, this variegated triad of spheres is created through the appropriation of an external self.

Punarapi ca pañcaśaktiprasaraṇakrameṇa bahirapi tat /
aṇḍatrayam vicitraṃ sṛṣṭaṃ bahirātmalābhena / / 46

47. Thus turning the power wheel, the cosmic mechanism, by means of His play, the God, the I whose form is pure, is situated in the position of conductor of the great wheel of power.

Iti Śakticakrayantraṃ krīḍāyogena vāhayan devaḥ /
ahameva śuddharūpaḥ Śaktimahācakranāyakapadasthaḥ / / 47

48. In me the universe appears like jars and other external objects in a clear mirror. From me everything emanates like the various dreams which arise from sleep.

Mayyeva bhāti viśvaṃ darpaṇa iva nirmale ghaṭādīnī /
mattaḥ prasarati sarvaṃ svapnavicitratvam iva dehaḥ / / 48

49. Like a body naturally constituted of hands, feet, etc., I assume the form of the universe. It is I alone who bursts forth in all beings as a luminous form.

Aham eva viśvarūpaḥ karacaraṇādisvabhāva iva dehaḥ /
sarvasmin aham eva sphurāmi bhāveṣu bhāsvarūpam iva / / 49

50. Though without the organs of the body I am the seer, the hearer, the smeller; though a non-doer I alone fashion the numerous philosophical systems (*siddhānta*), revealed scriptures (*Āgama*), and systems of logic (*tarka*).

Draṣṭā śrotā ghrātā dehenriyavarjito' py akartāpi /
siddhāntāgamatarkāṃ ścitrānahameva racayāmi / / 50

51. When the false conception of duality has thus fallen away and the seductress Māyā has been transcended, one becomes absorbed in Brahman like water in water, milk in milk.

Itthaṃ dvaitavikalpe galite pravilaṅghya mohinīṃ māyā /
salile salilaṃ kṣīre kṣīramiva brahmaṇi layī syāt / / 51

52. In this way, through meditation on the aggregate of *tattva*s he (the *yogin*) obtains the nature of Śiva. What sorrow, what delusion can there be for one who perceives all this as Brahman?

Itthaṃ tattvasamūhe bhāvanayā Śivamayatattvamabhīyate /
kaḥ śokaḥ ko mohaḥ sarvaṃ brahmāvalokayataḥ / / 52

53. The fruit of action, whether pleasant or unpleasant, is therefore from the confluence of false knowledge. Indeed, the defilement of company is as dangerous as the meeting of a non-thief and a thief.

Karmaphalaṃ śubhamaśubhaṃ mithyājñānena saṃgamādeva /
viṣamo hi saṅgadoṣas taskarayogo' pyataskarasyeva / / 53

54. The foolish people here who adhere to worldly concepts go to birth and death bound by the bolt of merit and demerit.

Lokavyavahārakṛtaṃ ya ihāvidyām upāsate mūdhaḥ /
te yānti janmamṛtyū dharmādharmārgalābaddhāḥ / / 54

55. But due to the power of the light of knowledge, the action constituted by merit and demerit accrued during the period of ignorance perishes like cotton acquired long ago [upon the descent of Śiva's grace].

Ajñānakālanicitaṃ dharmādharmātmakaṃ tu karmapi /
cirasaṃcitamiva tūlaṃ naśyati vijñānadīptivaśāt / / 55

56. When knowledge is obtained, then action no longer bears fruit; how then could there be rebirth for him whose association with the bond of rebirth is gone, he who is self luminous like Śiva Sun.

Jñānaprāptau kṛtam api na phalāya tato' sya janma katham /
gatajanmabandhayogo bhāti Śivārkaḥ svadīdhitibhiḥ / / 56

57. As a seed separated from chaff, husk, and bran produces no sprout, so the Self freed from *āṇava*, *māyā*, and *karma* [i.e., the three *malas*] produces no sprout of existence.

Tuṣakambukakiṃśārukamuktaṃ bījaṃ yathāñkuraṃ kurute /
naiva tathāṇavamāyākarmavimukto bhavāñkuraṃ hyātmā / / 57

58. He who knows the Self does not fear anywhere, for everything is his innate form; and he does not grieve, since in the Highest Reality there is no destruction.

Ātmajño na kutaścana bibheti sarva³ hi tasy nijarūpam /
naiva ca śocati yasmāt paramārthe nāśitā nāsti / / 58

59. From the accumulation of the jewels of supreme truth amassed in the treasury at the heart of the great mystery, [one realizes] "I alone am." In the state of Maheśvara, what misfortune is there, and of whom?

Atigūdhaḥṛdayagañjanprarūdhaparamārtharatnasaṃcayataḥ /
ahameveti Maheśvarabhāve kā durgatiḥ kasya / / 59

60. For the liberated one there is neither a dwelling place nor anywhere to go. Liberation is the revelation of the power of the Self through the breaking of the knot of ignorance.

Mokṣasya naiva kiṃcid dhāmāsti na cāpi gamanamanyatra /
ajñānagranthibhidā svaśaktyabhivyaktatā mokṣaḥ / / 60

61. He who has pierced the knot of ignorance, who is freed from doubt, whose delusion has been cast away, whose merit and sin have been destroyed—that one is liberated even while still united to the body.

Bhinnājñānagranthir gatasaṃdehaḥ parākṛtabhrāntiḥ /
prakṣīṇapuṇyapāpa vigrahayoge' pyasau muktaḥ / / 61

62. As the seed burnt by fire becomes incapable of germinating, so action burnt in the fire of knowledge does not produce rebirth.

Agnyabhidagdhaṃ bījaṃ yathā prarohāsamarthatāmeti /
jñānāgnidagdhamevaṃ karman janmapradaṃ bhavati / / 62

63. Indeed, through the conception of a future body determined by [present] action [arising from] limited intelligence, the mind accordingly appears contracted at the [time of] death of this body.

Parimitabuddhitvena hi karmocitabhāvidehabhāvanayā /
saṃkucitā citiretaddehadhvaṃse tathā bhavati / / 63

64-66. But if one were to know the Self as the very nature of Śiva, as immaculate intelligence comprised of a knowing subject who transcends the universe, omnipresent, an unsetting arisen sun, the divine will devoid of space-time continuum, immovable, imperishable, the completely perfect Lord, sole agent in the formation of the dissolution and arising of the multitude of powers, the wise creator of the laws of creation, etc., how then could there be transmigration for such an omniscient one? Where would he roam, and why?

Yadi punar amalaṃ bodhaṃ
sarvasamuttīrṇaboddhṛkartṛmayam /
vitatam anastamitoditabhārūpaṃ satyasaṃkalpam / / 64
Dikkālakalanavikalaṃ dhruvam avyayam īśvaraṃ suparipūrṇaṃ /
bahutataraśaktivrātapralayodayaviracaṇaikakartāram / / 65
Sṛṣṭyādividhisuvedhasamātmānaṃ Śivamayaṃ vibudhyeta /
kathamiva saṃsārī syād vitatasya kutaḥ kva vā saraṇam / / 66

67. Thus it can be proven that the work accomplished by the wise one does not bear fruit, for due to his firm conviction, "this is not mine, but His" there is no fructification [of actions] in this world.

Iti yuktibhir api siddhaṃ yat karma jñānino na tat saphalam /
na maedam api tu tasyeti dārḍhyo na hi phalaṃ loke / / 67

68. Awakened in this way by the energy of meditation, he sacrifices all limited cognitions into

the flaming fire of Self and thereby attains the nature of light.

Ittham sakalvikalpān pratibuddho bhāvanāsamīraṇataḥ /
ātmajyotiṣi dīpte juhvaj jyotirmayo bhavati / / 68

69. Eating anything whatever, clothed with anything at all, peaceful, dwelling anywhere, He, the Self of all beings, is liberated.

Aśnan yad vā tad vā saṃvito yena kenacic chāntaḥ /
yatra kvacan nivāsi vimucyate sarvabhūtātmā / / 69

70. Though he performs a hundred thousand horse sacrifices, or a hundred thousand killings of Brāhmaṇas, the stainless one, knowing the highest truth, is touched neither by good nor evil deeds.

Hayamedhaśatasahasrāṇy api kurute Brahmaghātalakṣāṇi /
paramārthavin na puṇyair na ca pāpaiḥ spṛśyate vimalaḥ / / 70

71. Abandoning passion, pleasure, anger, desire, depression, fear, greed, and delusion, being without hymns of praise or ritual exclamations, he would wander about like a senseless being devoid of speech or thought.

Madaharṣakopamanmathaviṣādabhayalobhamohaparivarjī /
nisstotravaṣaṭhkāro jaḍa iva vicared avādamatiḥ / / 71

72. This group beginning with passion, pleasure, etc., originates from the illusion of separation; pray, how may one who has [received] the awakening of the non-dual Self be touched by this (i.e., the group of afflictions).

Madarṣaprabhṛtir ayaṁ vargaḥ prabhavati vibhedasaṃmohāt /
advaitātmavibodhas tena kathaṃ spṛyatāṃ nāma / / 72

73. There is nothing whatsoever distinct from him to be worshipped or praised. Should he, the liberated one, beyond praise and ritual exclamation, rejoice in such things as religious hymns?

Stutyaṃ vā hotavyam nāsya vyatiriktam ast kiṃcana ca /
stotrādinā sa tuṣyed muktas tan nirnamaskṛtivaṣaṭhkaḥ / / 73

74. His abode of worship is both his innate body, comprised of the thirty-six principles and filled with walls and windows as his form, as well as the external world consisting of such things as jars.

Ṣaṭatrimśattattvabhṛtaṃ vigraharacanāgavākṣapaaripūrṇam /
nijam anyad api śarīraṃ ghaṭhādi vā tasya devagṛham / / 74

75. And therein he (the *sādhaka*) resides, worshipping with the stainless substance of self-reflection the auspicious Lord, the Supreme Self, Mahābhairava united with his consort.

Tatra ca paramātmaMahābhairavaŚivadevatāṃ svaśaktiyutām /
ātmāmarśanavimaladravyaiḥ paripūjyann āste / / 75

76. When the pile of the great seed containing the duality of outer and inner thought-constructs is offered to the raging fire of consciousness, this becomes his fire oblation, enacted without exertion.

Bahirantaraparikalpanabhedamahābījanicayan arpayataḥ /
tasyātidīptasaṃvijjvalane yatnād vinā bhavati homaḥ / / 76

77. [The *sādhaka*'s] meditation is not subject to setting or declining since the Lord Himself projects the forms of diversity. Indeed, that divine form which patterns his (i.e., the *sādhaka*'s) imagination is itself meditation.

Dhyānam anastamitam punar eṣa hi bhagavān vicitrarūpāṇi /
sṛjati tad eva dhyānaṃ saṇkalpanalikhitasatyarūpatvam / / 77

78. When in an inner vision he turns the entire series of worlds, the construction of the sequence of principles, as well as the group of sense organs, this is declared his prayer (*japa*).

Bhuvanāvalīṃ samastāṃ tattvakramakalpanām athākṣagaṇam /
antarbodhe parivartayati ca yat so 'sya japa uditaḥ / / 78

79-80. His religious duty, at once very difficulty and yet easy to accomplish, is when he sees everything with a vision of unity and meditates on Consciousness residing in the cremation ground of the universe, bearing the emblem of the skeleton of the body. He drinks from the skull of limited cognition which resides in his own hand and which is filled with the nectar of the universal essence.

Sarvaṃ samayā dṛṣṭyā yat paśyati yacca saṃvidaṃ manute /
viśvaśmaśānaniratāṃ vigrahakhaṭhvāṅgakalpanākalitām / / 79
Viśvarasāsavapūrṇaṃ nijakaragaṃ vedyakhaṇḍakakapālam /
rasayati ca yattadetad vratamasya sudurlabhaṃ ca sulabhaṃ ca / / 80

81. Having thus obtained the highest reality, that which is called the Great Lord, free from birth and destruction, and having accomplished all that is to be accomplished due to the revelation of the inner Seer, [the *sādhaka*] lives according to his own will.

Iti janmasāśabhīnaṃ paramārthaMaheśvarākhyam upalabhya /

upalabdhṛtāprakāśāt kṛtkṛtyas tiṣṭhati yatheṣṭham / / 81

82. He who knows the universal, all-pervasive Self beyond distinctions, [the Self] thus proclaimed that is the incomparable highest bliss—that one attains identification with That.

Vyāpinam abhihitam ittham sarvātmānaṃ vidhūtanānātvam /
nirupamaparamānandaṃ yo vetti sa tanmayo bhavati / / 82

83. Whether he abandons his body in a pilgrimage place or in the dwelling of an untouchable, and even if he has lost his memory, he attains Self-isolation for he has destroyed sorrow and become liberated in the moment of knowing.

Tīrthe śvapacapṛhe vā naṣṭhamṛtirapi parityajan deham /
jñānasamakālamuktaḥ kavalyaṃ yāti hataśokaḥ / / 83

84. Visiting holy places produces merit; meeting death in an untouchable's home leads to death; yet what affect can there be on him whose state is untouched by the stains of merit and demerit?

Puṇyāya tīrthasevā nirayāya śvapacasadananidhanagatiḥ /
puṇyāpuṇyakalaṅkasparśābhāve tu kiṃ tena / / 84

85. The casting of a rice-grain which has been removed from its chaff and bran into another chaff does not maintain its original form.

Tu.akambukasupṛthakkṛtataṇḍulakaṇtuṣadalāntarakṣepaḥ
taṇḍulakaṇasyaa kurute na punas tadrūpatādātmyam / / 85

86. In the same way, that Consciousness which is separated from Its veilings assumes a liberated nature free from their influence even while they continue to exist.

Tadvat kañcukapaṭhalīpṛthakkṛtā saṃvid atra saṃskārāt /
tiṣṢanty api muktātmā tatsparśavivarjitā bhavati / / 86

87. A gem made translucent by a highly skilled artisan suffers discoloration from the box which encases it. However, when the cause of this contamination is removed, the jewel then reveals its own true nature.

Kuśalatamaśilpikalpitavimal^bhāvaḥ samudgakopādheḥ /
malino 'pi maṇir upādher vicchede svacchaparamārthaḥ / / 87

88. Likewise, Consciousness abiding in the purity of the *sadguru*'s teachings is liberated from the limitations of the body and acquires the form of Śiva, void of all impurities.

Evaṃ sadguruśāsanavimalasthiti vedanaṃ tanūpādheḥ /
muktam upādhyantaraśūunyam api samābhāti Śivarūpam / / 88

89. By means of unwavering faith in the authority of such things as religious texts, one is absorbed in that (i.e., the object of faith), and before [death] attains heaven, hell, or the human condition.

Śāstrādiprāmāṇyād avicalitaśraddhayā hi tanmayatām /
prāptas sa eva pūrvaṃ svargaṃ narakaṃ manuṣyatvaṃ / / 89

90. But that last moment which, producing a condition of merit or sin, becomes for the ignorant a cause of future birth, is not [for the wise one] a cause of destiny.

Antyaḥ kṣaṇas tu tasmin puṇyāṃ pāpāṃ ca vā sthitiṃ puṣyan /
mūḍhānāṃ sahakāibhāvaṃ gacchati gatau tu na sa hetuḥ / / 90

91. Those who realize their true nature to be the Self—even if they be cattle, snakes, or other beasts—are purified from past actions by this awakened knowledge and [now] go to that destiny (i.e., union with the *Ātman*).

Ye 'pi tadātmatvena vidhuḥ paśupakṣisarīsṛpādayaḥ svagatim /
te 'pi purātanasambodhasaṃskṛtās tāṃ gatiṃ yānti / / 91

92. The person imprisoned within the body [creates his] own heaven and hell; and with the destruction of that (=the body) he acquires another body in accordance with his past tendencies (*vāsanās*).

Svargamayo nirayamayas tad ayaṃ dehāntarālagaḥ puruṣaḥ /
tadbhaṅge svaucityād dehāntarayogam abhyeti / / 92

93. At the moment of awakening his own Self is instantaneously revealed and he thus becomes That. Even with the decay of the body such a being is not affected.

Evaṃ jñānāvasare svātmā sakṛd asya yādṛg avabhātaḥ /
tādṛśa eva tadāsau na dehapāte 'nyathā bhavati / / 93

94-95. Paralysis of the organs, loss of memory, faltering of the breath, rhumititis of the joints, a variety of diseases—all are the fruition of bodily processes. Indeed, how could these [ailments] not arise while one is identified with the body? Even so, the wise one, although still bound by illusion, does not fall away from the highest truth, his own Self, at the time of death.

Karaṇagaṇasampramoṣaḥ smṛtināśaḥ śvāsakalilatā chedaḥ /
marmasu rujāviśeṣāḥ śarīrasaṃskārajo bhogaḥ / / 94

96. When one receives the path of the Supreme Truth from the mouth of the teacher, then by means of intense empowerment (*atitīvraśaktipāta*) all obstacles are removed and one becomes Śiva Himself.

Paramārthamārgam enaṃ jhag iti yadā gurumukhāt samabhyeti /
atitīvraśaktipātāt tadaiva nirvighnam eva Śivaḥ / / 96

97. [Others] rise to the state of the Supreme Principle, the universally transcendent form, in a gradual way by ascending the steps of the ladder [of *tattvas*], and at the time of death are absorbed in Śiva.

Sarvottīrṇaṃ rūpaṃ sopānapadakrameṇa saṃśrayataḥ /
paratattvarūḍhilābhe paryante Śivamayībhāvaḥ / / 97

98-99. But that *sādhaka* who, despite the ardent desire of his heart, has reached only the middle stages of *sādhanā* and not that highest state, the Supreme Reality, will thus one day die [without attaining liberation]. Nevertheless, this type of aspirant, though having fallen from yoga (*yoga-bhraṣṭas*), is said in the sacred texts to become a lord of the worlds of wondrous enjoyments; and due to the power of his [previous] spiritual practice, destined to attain Śiva in his next lifetime.

Tasya tu paramārthamayīṃ dhārām agatasya madhyaviśrānteḥ /
tatpadalābhotasukacetaso 'pi maraṇaṃ kadācit syāt / / 98
Yogabhraṣṭaḥ śāstre 'sau citrabhogabhuvanapatiḥ /
viśrāntisthānavaśād bhūtvā janmāntare Śivībhavati / / 99

100. That one who, in spite of repeated efforts, does not attain union on this path of Supreme Truth nevertheless enjoys for a long time with contented mind the experiences of pleasure in the god worlds.

Paramārthamārgam enaṃ hy abhyasyāprāpya yogam api nāma /
suralokabhogabhāgī mukitamanā modate suciram / / 100

101. As a universal monarch is honored by all people in his domain, so the one fallen from yoga is honored in the [celestial] worlds by all the gods.

Viṣayeṣu sārvabhaumaḥ sarvajanaiḥ pūjyate yathā rājā /
bhuvaneṣu sarvadevair yogabhraṣṭas tathā pujyaḥ / / 101

102. After a long time, he again obtains a human body. Practicing yoga, he then reaches the divine, immortal state from which he never again returns.

Mahatā kālena punar mānuṣyaṃ prāpya yogam abhyasya /
prāpnoti divyam amṛtaṃ yasmād āvartate na punaḥ / / 102,

103. Therefore, whosoever is devoted to this path of Truth attains the state of Śiva. One should strive for the Supreme Reality by meditating in this manner (i.e., as prescribed in the *Paramārthasāra*).

Tasmāt sanmārge 'smin nirato yaḥ kaścid eti sa Śivatvam /
iti matvā paramārthe yathā tathāpi prayatanīyam / / 103

104. By meditating on that supreme Brahman which Abhinavagupta has revealed in this concise exposition, one instantaneously experiences possession by Śiva within one's own heart.

Idam Abhinavaguptoditasaṃkṣepaṃ dhyāyataḥ paraṃ brahma /
acirād eva Śivatvaṃ nijahṛdayāveśam abhyeti / / 104

105. This most secret essence of doctrine has been encapsulated in a hundred *Āryā*-verses by me, Abhinavagupta, who am inspired by remembrance of Śiva's feet.

Āryāśatena tad idaṃ saṃkṣiptaṃ śāstrasāram atigūḍham /
Abhinavaguptena mayā Śivacaraṇasmaraṇadīptena / / 105

Thus the venerable great lord, the most eminent teacher, Abhinavagupta, has composed this comprehensive text called the *Essence of Supreme Truth.*

Iti Śrīmanmāheśvarācāryābhinavaguptaviracitaḥ
Paramārthasārābhidhogranthaḥ samāptaḥ / /

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The Monkey Grammarian and the Wise Alchemist

(Some thoughts on Abhinavagupta and the poetics of Octavio Paz in *The Monkey Grammarian*)

Dr. Òscar Pujol

The phrase monkey grammarian is the metonymical expression of Octavio Paz himself, while the wise alchemist refers directly to Abhinavagupta and figuratively to the Sanskrit poetic tradition in its entirety. These lines, hence, intend to show how Octavio Paz's point of view, at least in *The Monkey Grammarian,* is close to that of Abhinavagupta in particular and, in general, to certain aspects of Tantra. With this, we don't intend at least not here to identify possible influences, but rather to underline the universal quality of certain concepts, independently of their historical cross contamination.

I must insert a brief parenthesis in order to quickly introduce Abhinavagupta. Without a doubt one of the most interesting figures of the Indian Middle Ages (11th Century), in Abhinavagupta, erudition combines with a creative vision capable of renovating inherited cultural baggage. In addition, he had a multifaceted personality. Indian tradition has recorded his work as a literary critic and, recently, a rediscovery is taking place around his philosophical contributions as a representative of the Trika School of Kashmiri Śaivism. Abhinavagupta was also a spiritual teacher with a significant amount of religious responsibility.

His interest for poetry – and saying poetry in this case is almost equal to saying theater, since, for Abhinavagupta, poetry comes to fruition in its dramatic form – is not impartial. He thinks of theater as an 'aesthetic ritual that purifies mundane emotions'.[1] I call him a 'wise alchemist' in order to indicate a rather chemical notion, or, I should almost say, a culinary notion, of poetic mechanisms. To poeticize is to 'add flavour' to a basic ingredient (the emotion) of a dish (the poetry), via the right mix of its components: the causes, effects and circumstances that accompany the emotion. Abhinavagupta was well aware of the fact that an emotion, precisely because of its emotional quality, is not apt for aesthetic consumption. Ordinary emotions are actually pleasant or painful, and cause reactions such as rejection or acceptance, as long as the 'aesthetic emotion', even when clothed with tears, is delightful. Abhinavagupta answered, in a very structured manner, a key question for Western aesthetics: How does the (aesthetic) emotion surface? We are unable, here, to explore this answer in detail, but one of Abhinavagupta's conclusions concerns us directly. As mentioned, the poetic function of language is to turn an ordinary emotion, a passion, into an aesthetic emotion, and an aesthetic emotion is, in a manner of sorts, the underside of passion. The name of this aesthetic emotion in Sanskrit is *rasa,* which literally means flavor, juice, essence. The alembic of poetry

I call him a 'wise alchemist' in order to indicate a rather chemical notion, or, I should almost say, a culinary notion, of poetic mechanisms. To poeticize is to 'add flavour' to a basic ingredient (the emotion) of a dish (the poetry), via the right mix of its components: the causes, effects and circumstances that accompany the emotion.

1.Rajasekhara: El Nacimiento del hombre poesía, Los libros de Benarés, Benarés, 1991, pág. 60.

distills the ordinary emotion and gives it back to us in the form of juice or essence: the liqueur of the *rasa*. The ingestion of this liqueur produces aesthetic awe *(camatkāra)*. For Abhinavagupta, the nature of this dēlectātiō is extraordinary, and the word that he used to describe it is *alaukika* (literally, 'non-mundane'), since the perception of *rasa* does not travel the ordinary paths of knowledge (perception, inference, verbal authority, etc.), but an epistemological path exclusive to it. Given that, for Abhinavagupta as well as for the great majority of Indian thinkers, the quintessence of reality is precisely Absolute Joy, the aesthetic experience is joyous because it momentarily reveals the nature of this ultimate reality to us.

The basic idea that lies beneath this proposition is as well-known in the Indian context, as it is in the Western one, even if, in the former, its presence might be slightly more conspicuous. The world that we live in is the representation of a reality with capital letters and is, hence, distanced from that ineffable reality. The world is a reflection, the world is language and hence deceit, insofar as it cannot faithfully reproduce the original, that unfathomable transcendence. Poetic discourse is deceitful and twisted, making constant use of exaggeration and contradictory similarities, and is therefore, a lie about a lie that paradoxically makes it possible for us to glimpse the splendor of an unnamed reality.

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In *The Monkey Grammarian,* Octavio Paz says: 'The poet is not one who names things, but one who dissolves their names, one who discovers that things do not have a name, and that the names that we call them are not theirs. The critique of paradise is called language: the abolition of proper names; the critique of language is called poetry: names grow thinner and thinner, to transparency, to evaporation. In the first case, the world becomes language; in the second, language is transformed into a world. Thanks to the poet, the world is left without names. Then, for an instant, we can see it precisely as it is – an adorable azure.'[2] And, further ahead: 'The path of poetic writing leads to the abolition of writing: at the end of it, we are confronted with an inexpressible reality. The reality revealed by poetry and that appears behind language – the reality visible only through the destruction of language that the poetic act represents, is literally intolerable and maddening. At the same time, without the vision of this reality, man is not man, and language is not language. Poetry gives us sustenance and destroys us, it gives us speech and dooms us to silence.'[3]

From Chapter 18 onward, the reflections on poetry and language in *The Monkey Grammarian,* abound. To follow, I attempt to gather and schematize some of the main ideas outlined by Octavio Paz in these chapters:

1) 'Paradise is governed by an ontological grammar: things and beings are its names and each name is a proper name.'[4] Ontological grammar is equal to the innocence prior to banishment from earthly paradise: the kingdom of proper names. Opposite this ontological grammar, is linguistic grammar, which corresponds to our fallen nature: the kingdom where the arbitrary nature of the sign, reigns. Human convention has now become the measure of the world and the world is confused by its own human perception.

2) The two-fold nature of language: a) Linguistic language or, simply, language, which is, in turn, the critique of paradise, and b) Poetic language: the critique of language is called poetry, which is in itself a form of language, 'Poetry is number, proportion, measure: language, except that it is a language that has turned in upon itself, that devours itself and destroys itself in order that there may appear what is other, what is without measure, the dizzying foundation, the

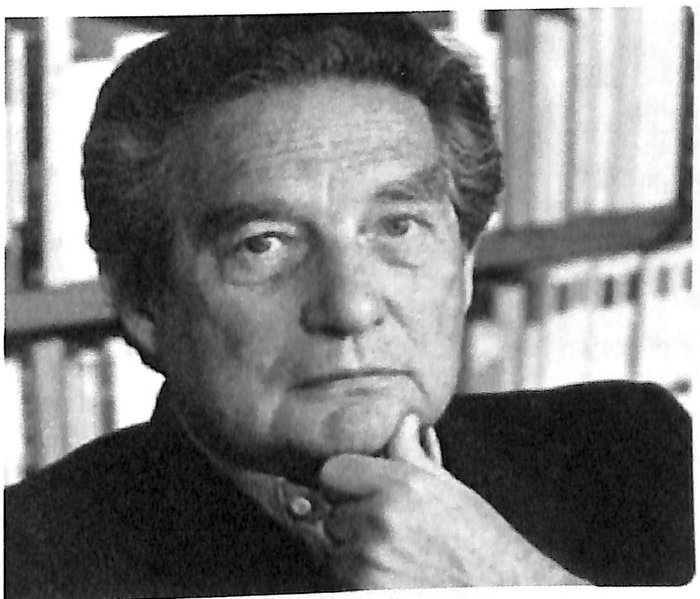
2. O.Paz: *The Monkey Grammarian*, Arcade Publishing, New York, 1990, pp. 109-110.
3. Cf. O. Paz; Op. cit., pp. 132-133.
4. Cf. O. Paz; Op. cit., p. 108.
5. Cf. O. Paz; Op. cit., p. 133.

unfathomable abyss of which measure is born. The reverse of language.'[5]

To this two-fold character corresponds a two-fold movement: a) Language is distance, it 'Sinks its roots into this world but transforms its juices into signs and symbols'.[6] It is writing in search of meaning. Language expels meaning and then chases after it. Language is a continuous flow. Language is movement, and b) Language is also the appeal against that distance, since language can devour itself. In this case, we're dealing with language that doesn't flow but, rather, that is present. Mobile language that goes nowhere. It is comparable to reading, the dissolution of text, the writing that banishes meaning.

This two-fold movement has several destinations. Being, as it is, a movement of evolution and involution, it is only natural for the point of departure of one to be the point of arrival of the other, and vice versa. For the first type of movement which is a path, which is writing, the destination is the capturing of meaning. But poetic language is not a path; it is crystallized time. 'Poetry does not attempt to discover what there is at the end of the road; it conceives of the text as a series of transparent strata within which the various parts – the different verbal and semantic currents – produce momentary configurations as they intertwine or break apart as they reflect each other or efface each other. Poetry contemplates itself, fuses with itself, and obliterates itself in the crystallizations of language.'[7] The end of the road is the quest for meaning. But poetic language does not seek the end, the meaning.

Finally, we also have the two-fold perspective of language. The perspective of poetry is simultaneous or converging, as opposed to the lineal or diverging, centrifugal perspective of ordinary language. 'Whether spoken or written, words advance and inscribe themselves one after the other upon the space that is theirs: the sheet of paper, the wall of air. They advance, they go from here to there, they trace a path: they go by, they are time. Although they never stop moving from one point to another, and thus describe a horizontal or vertical line (depending on the nature of the writing), from another perspective, the simultaneous or converging one, which is that of poetry, the phrases that go to make up a text appear as great, motionless, transparent blocks: the text does not go anywhere, language ceases to flow.'[8]



Octavio Paz

3) By dissolving the names, the poet shows the world as it is.

4) Poetic vision is, nonetheless, fleeting.

5) The vision of reality revealed by poetry is horrifying because it lacks measure. It is, however, at the same time, fascinating.

6) Ontological equivalence between the identity revealed by poetry and the phenomenological world expressed by ordinary language. 'The body is always somewhere beyond the body.'[9] Octavio Paz says: 'Poetry contemplates itself, fuses with itself, and obliterates itself in the crystallizations of language. Apparitions, metamorphoses, volatilizations, precipitations of presences. These configurations are crystallized time: although they are perpetually in motion, they always point to the same hour – the hour of change. Each one of them contains all the others, each one is inside the others: change is only the oft-repeated and ever different metaphor of identity.'[10] And further ahead: 'The illusion of motionlessness, the play of mirrors of the one: identity is completely empty; it is a crystallization and in its transparent core the movement of analogy begins all over once again.'[11]

6. Cf. O. Paz; Op. cit., p. 133.
7. Cf. O. Paz; Op. cit., p. 155.
8. Cf. O. Paz; Op. cit., p. 153.
9. Cf. O. Paz; Op. cit., p. 142.
10. Cf. O. Paz; Op. cit., p. 155.
11. Cf. O. Paz; Op. cit., pp. 156-157.

Speaking of crystallizations, I'd like to underline the meaningful way in which Octavio Paz chooses his metaphors. In *The Monkey Grammarian,* Paz often compares language to growing vegetation. In this sense, the opposite of language as vegetation is not the desert or the sterile moor, but the quartz crystal. Certainly, the crystal is as barren as an empty lot. The only difference is that the crystal is translucent, luminous and hence contains the seed of all later development: chlorophyll is still missing, but there is light.

From among all the points we've underscored, all but one correspond rather closely with the ideas held by Abhinavagupta and the Trika School of Kashmiri Shaivism. Let us have a quick look.



Ontological grammar corresponds to the third level of the word, the language that sees (paśyantī), or the voice of intuition that, internally, reveals the meaning of words and, externally, that of the objects referred to.[12] Although I use the word 'language', we are evidently in a realm far beyond the linguistic. In this natural language, as pointed out by A. Avalon in his book *The Garland of Letters,* words are things and things are words, since the word is the subtle sound emitted by the object's diverse energies, at the time it was formed. It is not an onomatopoeic language, given that onomatopoeia is the external sound produced by an object upon coming into contact with another. The natural name, on the other hand, reproduces the energies that come together in the formation of the object and, hence, its manifestation. According to Indian tradition, natural language develops within the causal realm of the universe. It is not composed of coarse sounds such as those of articulated language, and can't be heard by the ordinary human ear.

It is very interesting to analyze the associative path undertaken by Paz that culminates in the formulation of this ontological grammar. The point of departure is external reality, and, specifically, the undifferentiated perception of a grove at dusk. This undifferentiated perception *(nirvikalpa-pratyaksha)* has been conveniently classified by Indian philosophers from the Nyāya School, and is the first stage of perception in the ordinary sense of the term. When the senses come into contact with the object, they first seize its category as substance, which is to say, 'pure existence, free of attributes'. The qualities of the object are not perceived in terms of its character as an individual member of a species, nor is the universal quality that determines its species, perceived. In other words, the pitcher appears simply as 'something that is', without the general idea of pitcher as such. Octavio Paz states: 'The grove of trees has turned black and become a gigantic pile of sacks of coal abandoned in the middle of the plot of ground by some unknown person for some unknown reason. A brute reality that says nothing except that it is (but, what is it?) and that bears no resemblance to anything at all[13]...' Octavio Paz goes on to realize that, due to its lack of attributes, the comparison of undifferentiated perception is a contradiction, and rectifies immediately, offering, as an excuse for his metaphor, the relationship between the unlikelihood of the sacks of coal and the unintelligibility of the grove; its unintelligibility comes from its excess of reality, which is to say, from the fact that in this type of perception, only the being of the object is perceived, and not the attributes understood as limitative impositions on that given existence or brute reality. This excessive reality makes it irreducible to other realities, which leads to the assertion of the object's irreconcilable individuality. When this irreconcilable individuality moves from the axis of space to that of time, the result is that the object changes every instant, since its individuality applies to each successive moment. Thus, Octavio Paz circumstantially gives in to the temptation of the Buddhist notion that everything is temporary. But Octavio Paz, unsatisfied with this position, resorts to the impressions of ordinary perception to refute it. He considers that the object cannot be merely temporary, given that, throughout a succession of instants, the grove maintains its 'groveness'. This proposes a dilemma: the grove

12. Dyczkowski M.; *The Doctrine of Vibration*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1989. p. 196.

13. Cf. O. Paz; Op. cit., p. 107.

possesses its own reality but is, at the same time, included in the universal 'grove'. Its unique existence grants it a proper name, but the fact of belonging to a species snatches that very same right. The first option corresponds to paradise or to the platonic universe of ideas, and the second, to the earthly world or to the universal qualities embodied by its objects. Hence, even though the point of departure is entirely platonic, the point of arrival, as we shall see below, is rather close to Kashmiri Shaivism, which claims as its own the effective reality of individual objects.

The two-fold direction of language has been acknowledged in India since the Ṛgveda period. In the case of Kashmiri Shaivism, and from the perspective of spiritual practice, reverted language capable of undoing the linguistic imbroglio, is identifiable with the mantra. Abhinavagupta is more precise and attributes these qualities to poetic language. Here, we shall point out only that both the mantra and poetry are forms of reverted language because, in both cases, the signifiers do not possess a fixed meaning; they have multiple signifiers. In both cases, their power of connotation is incredibly expansive, which makes it possible to go beyond the literality of described phenomena and swim upstream.[14]

The ontological equivalence between transcendental reality and the phenomenological world, is one of the most interesting coincidences between the two authors. For Kashmiri Shaivism, non-duality is understood as an extension of diversity and identity. Both are equally included in the absolute.

For Abhinavagupta, the inspiration *(pratibhā)* that allows the poet to unmask the ruses of language, is directly related to *Para Vac* or the Supreme Word, which is nothing more than the luminous and vibrant awareness of the pure being.[15] The primordial psalm prior to creation. This rumor of the word is the essence of all things. But, for Abhinavagupta, the direct link between the inspired poet and the Supreme Word, makes the former become a kind of parallel demiurge capable of recreating undreamed worlds that captivate their audience. This captivation is also liberating, given that it is rooted in pure awareness. In fact, it is a very ancient idea: in the Golden Age, the bard was always a visionary.

I've been unable to find explicit references to the brevity of Abhinavagupta's aesthetic experience, but the evidence seems to suggest that, for Abhinavagupta, this fleetingness is understood as one of the differences between the aesthetic experience and the mystical trance. For Octavio Paz, in order for man to bear it, the vision of reality without measure, which is the fruit of this aesthetic experience, is necessarily temporary. I think that Abhinavagupta would say that only the yogi is capable of bearing the prolonged vision of that reality without measure, and that for the ordinary man who is as yet bound to his passions, this vision of reality must necessarily be temporary.

The ontological equivalence between transcendental reality and the phenomenological world, is one of the most interesting coincidences between the two authors. For Kashmiri Shaivism, non-duality is understood as an extension of diversity and identity. Both are equally included in the absolute. The ignorance of the spirit is nothing but the ignorance of the true nature of matter.[16] However – and here, we come across a fundamental difference – Octavio Paz also shows a clear tendency to identify, as do some Buddhist schools, transcendental reality with emptiness.[17]

Finally, for Octavio Paz, 'The reality revealed by poetry and that appears behind language is literally intolerable and maddening,'[18] which couldn't be further from the assumptions of Abhinavagupta, who considers reality to be a joyous and radiant mass of pure consciousness. In fact, I think that this is the most important difference between the two, and Octavio Paz underlines it: 'And this vision overwhelms us, drives us mad; if things are but

14. Cf. Dyczkowski; Op. cit., p. 200.
15. J.L. Masson & M.V. Patwardhan; *Santarasa and Abhinavagupta's Philosophy of Aesthetics*, Bandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1985, p. 13.
16. Cf. Dyczkowski; Op. cit., pp. 37-40.
17. Vide. M. Bhattacharya; 'La noción del tiempo en Ladera Este' in Estudios de hispanismo contemporáneo. Acts from the First International Seminar on Hispanic Culture in the 20th Century, Ed. Miguel Zugasti, Embassy of Spain, New Delhi, 1990, pp. 19-24.
18. Cf. O. Paz; Op. cit., p. 132.

have no name: on earth there is no measure whatsoever'.[19] And further: 'The night saves me. We can't see without risking madness'.[20] In fact, this unbearable and maddening reality revealed by poetry, is comparable to those empty confines that symbolize the clear of the woods in Dadda's painting: the site of the appearance that is, simultaneously, that of disappearance; a temple of nothing, erected in honor of the obsessive restlessness of an eternal wait: 'Between never and always there lies in wait anxiety, with its thousand feet and its single eye'.[21] It seems to me that this difference between the two is symptomatically cultural. On one hand, Indian tradition courts and adores that unnamable reality. On the other, Western tradition has always mistrusted the immeasurable absolute, sharing the fear of losing the measure of things and, hence, one's place in the world, as well as the notion of ethics and the efficiency of the action. In this sense, Octavio Paz exemplifies the dilemma of the modern man: anxiety in the face of that reality previous to language, but also a fascination that doesn't always find a means of expression. 'As night gathers at my window, I feel that I am not from here, but from there, from that world that has just been erased and awaits dawn's resurrection. I come from there, we all come from there and it is where we'll return to. Fascination for the other side, seduction of this non-human side of the universe: where there is no name, no measure[22].'

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In *The Monkey Grammarian*, a notably fluid poetic prose combines rather luminous descriptions of external reality with equally crystalline reflections that scrutinize the mental activity of the author himself. In this sense, a continuous undulation between these two types of composition is found in the text. The external landscape provides the stimulus for the writing to penetrate the mental domain of the author, while, at the same time, the internal landscape is transformed, ideas become trees, phrases become vines, until awareness reemerges in the objective external world, in an awakened state. This oscillation between the inner and the outer is a characteristic trait of conscience, but Octavio Paz achieves something more than turning this fluctuation in a matter of style: this continuous motion of comings and goings manages to erase, or at least lessen, the border that separates both worlds. It could be said that the text seeks, just as the ascetic on page 69, 'Equanimity, the point where the opposition between inner and outer vision, between what we see and what we imagine, ceases'.[23] In *The Monkey Grammarian*, Octavio Paz turns poetic speculation into poetry, and lyrical description into philosophy, while adding, with great accuracy, his two most well-known expressions: that of the poet and that of the essayist. I believe that Abhinavagupta would have been extremely pleased with this synthesis that so skillfully embodies one of his greatest concerns: the reconciliation of the poet and the philosopher.

19. Cf. O. Paz; Op. cit., p. 110.
20. Cf. O. Paz; Op. cit., p. 120.
21. Cf. O. Paz; Op. cit., p. 126.
22. Cf. O. Paz; Op. cit., p. 120.
23. Cf. O. Paz; Op. cit., p. 74.

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Shaivism



Introducing Kashmir Shaivism

Prof. Navjivan Rastogi

Kashmir in Indian mind has become an embodiment of our most cherished democratic ideals, catholic and humanistic outlook and cultural synthesis. And were we to add that Kashmir is equally the land of philosophical speculation and creative thinking as it is a country of saffron flowers and bunches of grapes (echoing Bilhana: *Vikramāṅkdeva Carit* 1.21) we need not be accused of resorting to hyperbole. Jayaratha has not failed to take note of these twin peculiarities (*T.A.V*, XII, p. 429) of Kashmir, the seat of the Goddess of Learning, with special reference to Kashmir Śaivism. Even the plan and design of the city of Srinagar has been patterned on that of the *śrīcakra*, according to a tradition current even today (*Śrīvīdyānagara*).

This Kashmir Śaivism is generally believed to be monistic in temper and idealistic in ideology. We have, however, to be very clear that the word Kashmir Śaivism has extremely wide connotation and includes within its range all the branches of Śaiva speculation - monistic, monistic-cum-dualistic and dualistic associated with Kashmir. If Abhinavagupta's *Tantrāloka* is any guide, the Trika of Kashmir Śaivism stands for the total Tantric lore of Kashmir. It has to be specifically stated that in his magnum opus i.e., *Tantrāloka* (the Light of Tantras), Abhinavagupta dwells on both the diverse currents of thought namely, *tantra prakriyā* and *kula prakriyā* (*T.A.V.* I, p.24).

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While *tantra prakriyā* is traced straight to Tryambaka, the first ancestor referred to by Somananda, the *kula prakriyā* is traced to Tryambaka through his daughter (*T.A.V.*, I, p. 27) and is therefore designated as *ardha-tryambaka.* To be precise, the *Kula* system is identified with *kula prakriyā,* while the three independent monistic systems namely *trika*, *krama* and *pratyabhijñā* are subsumed under the *tantra prakriyā* or the Traiyambaka School. In this scheme, Abhinavagupta does not include the Spanda branch, possibly because of its lack of Tantric character and deep affiliation to the Shākta mode of thinking. This fact has been noted by Kshemaraja, though in a different context (*Spanda Nirṇaya* p.77). With all their differences, however, they constitute what is precisely meant by Kashmir Śaivism. So far these four represent the monistic trend of thought.

Alternatively, we might approach the different systems constituting Kashmir Śaivism from the point of view of the lands of their origin. Thus broadly we have two types of schools –

(i) Those which originated in Kashmir, and

(ii) Others which were originally associated with other parts of the country through the ancestral line of preceptors but were nurtured and developed afresh in Kashmir

Under the previous head we have *Krama*, *Spanda* and *Trika* systems which are brought into existence by Shivananda (circa 800), Kallata (circa 825) and Vasugupta (circa 800) respectively. The roots of the

Krama system even go much earlier. It is interesting to note that the *Krama* system has two phases earlier and later which evolve into two full-grown schools and may be designated as Northern and Southern schools respectively. The Northern that belongs to Kashmir is Shiva-oriented with obvious Shākta leanings. The Southern School, which also traces its origin to Kashmir, in fact belongs to Chola in Deccan and is primarily Shakti-oriented. Kallata, the first exponent of the *Spanda* system, is a famous *Siddha* during the reign of the King Avantivarman (circa 855-883) as recorded by Kalhana. Kallata's *Spanda Kārikā* is commented upon by himself, Utpala Vaishnava (10th century), Ramakantha (10th century) and Kshemaraja (10th-11th century). Vasugupta's famous *Śivasūtras* furnish a philosophical foothold to the Tantric lore and accord a mystic bias to the Trika line of thought. He is commented upon by Kallata (9th century), Bhaskara (10th century), Kshemaraja, Varadarāja (11th century) and others.

Under the second head may be placed *Kula* and *Pratyabhijñā*. Of the two, the *Kula* system as propagated by Abhinavagupta, by and large appears to be of non-Kashmirian origin. Abhinavagupta owes his initiation into the system to one Shambhunatha who hailed from Jalandhara and has received deepest veneration at the hands of the former. The alien origin of the *Kula* system is further corroborated by Jayaratha's observation that the Vāmakeśvarī branch of the system was promulgated in Kashmir by Ishvarashiva (9th century), the celebrated author of the *Rasamahodadhi* and *Śaṅkara Raśi* (9th century) (*Vāmakeśvarimatavivaraṇaṃ* of Jayaratha, p. 48). Jayaratha seems to have inherited this tradition direct from Vishvavarta (9th century), who happens to be a precursor of Sambhunātha. Somānanda, Abhinava's great-grand teacher in *Pratyabhijñā*, also wrote a commentary on the *Parātrimśikā*, avowedly a *Kula/ Trika Tantra*. It, therefore, appears certain that its alien character could not be sustained any longer so much so that this system is represented by the Southern School of the *Kula* system to have originated in Kashmir. However, this *Kula* culminates in *Pratyabhijñā* i.e., *anupāya*, according to Abhinavagupta's own verdict in the *Tantrāloka*.

On the threshold of the *Pratyabhijñā* system, though we notice that ancestral lineages of the two stalwarts of the system, Somānanda and Abhinavagupta, were brought to Kashmir from outside, yet the enormous gap that entailed between their settling down and taking to philosophical exposition hardly justifies us to treat them as immigrants. Thus Somānanda (9th century) is credited with breaking an entirely new ground towards human emancipation and furnishing a logical and rational basis in his *Śivadṛṣṭi* for the scattered tantric ideals (*Īśvara Pratyabhijñā Kārikā* 4.1.16). He is rightly hailed as the 'originator of the reasoning' (*tarkasya kartā*). He is followed by a galaxy of great authors e.g. Utpala, Lakshmanagupta, Kshemaraja, Yogarāja, Jayaratha and others. Utpala enlarges the scope and consolidates the rational side of the system in his learned commentary on the *Śivadṛṣṭi* and his independent treatises like *Īśvara-Pratyabhijñā-Kārikā* and *Siddhitrayī*, marking logical continuation of his master's work. Through Lakshmanagupta, the author of *Śrīśāstra*, he is succeeded by Abhinavagupta (circa 950-1020), the greatest of all Kashmirian thinkers and one of the greatest among the Indian luminaries. Abhinavagupta is credited with the authorship of more than forty-two works. Of these the *Tantrāloka, Vimarśinī* and *Bṛhatī Vimarśinī* on Utpala's *Kārikās* and *Vivṛtti* respectively, *Vivaraṇa* on the *Parā triṁśikā, Locana* on the *Dhvanyāloka* and *Abhinavabhāratī* on the *Nāṭya Śāstra* are the works of supreme value and have been serving as reference books in their respective fields for centuries. He, with his unparalleled genius, synoptic vision, profound textual exposure and creative insight, enriched and illuminated the Śaiva philosophy, Tantric culture and aesthetic thought all at the same time. In him Somānanda's aim of establishing the system on sound footing, against the onslaughts of the Buddhists, grammarians, Śākta monists, and Śaiva dualists, a hint to which is obviously discernible in the preamble of the *Śiva-sūtra-vārtika* of Varadarāja (S.S.Va. 1.1), is realised for good.

Coming to the thought content of these systems, they broadly agree on fundamental principles. Their mutual differences center around varying orientations and emphases, which needs detailed treatment. Their originality lies in the novel approach to the problems of philosophy and human emancipation which may be summed up as below:-

(i) Reality is consciousness, not only pure but perfect also. Perfection and totality result in self-spontaneous manifestation of the Absolute as psycho-metaphysical subjectivity on the one hand and objective data on the other

(ii) Reality, though kinetic, is continuous and suffers no gap. This is brought about by tantric transformation of the Sāṁkhya thesis of *sādṛśyapariṇāmavāda* into *ābhāsavāda*, that of *sāmya* (perfect harmony of three *guṇas* in *Prakṛti)* into *sāmarasya* of the subjective and the objective. In addition, the concepts of *pariṇāma-nityatā*

and *kūtasthānītyatā,* enunciated by *Mahābhāṣyakāra* and Vyasa, in his *Bhaṣya* on the *Yogasūtra*, referring to different states of beings, are condensed and fused into one as Maheśvara, the dynamic Absolute or autonomous consciousness *(svatantra samvit)*

(iii) The autonomy of consciousness, by its very implication, reconciles contradiction *(paraspara-parihāra)* and synthesizes dichotomy of the subjective and objective of the dualists into pure, perfect and intuitive experience. Thus, the ultimate unity is not an abstract unity but a concrete unity. In the words of Prof. Pandey, :It is not only the unity of opposites, as Hegel maintains his Absolute to be, but also the unity of distinct as Croce maintains". (*Comparative Aesthetics*, Vol. 1: Indian, p. 101) Hence the Reality is essentially unity containing multiplicity within

(iv) The autonomy i.e., self-spontaneity of consciousness, also renders the entire casual explanation futile and dogmatic. In Hegel the instances of reality are 'deduced' from Absolute, here they are 'manifested' or 'expressed'. The cosmic law of causation is, therefore, transformed into the Absolutic functionalism

(v) This perfect consciousness is not something remote but essentially identical with self-consciousness and is an ever present point of reference in every experience, actual or possible

(vi) Such a view of reality revolutionizes the very mode and method of our time-old thinking and the following conclusions, of necessity, emerge:

(a) Axiologically, emancipation of human soul is the highest value. Here *mokṣa* consists in inculcation of synthesis of worldly enjoyment/ acquisition of powers (i.e. perfections) and transcendental experience of the self *(bhoga – mokśa – sāmarasyātmāh mokṣaḥ*). The world is liberation in changed perspective

(b) Notwithstanding their mutual divergences, most Indian schools are unanimous that *mukti* follows in the wake of our distinguishing the Self from the not-Self. On the contrary, here the self-realization consists in synthesis of these two opposites and rules out the negation of either

(c) Self-realization is, therefore, 're-cognition' *(Pratyabhijñā).* Whatever has been passing through as 'this' hitherto, is now recognised as 'I', because of intrinsic oneness of their character as freedom and consciousness, technically called autonomous agentiality and subjectivity *(kartṛtva* and *jñātṛtva)*

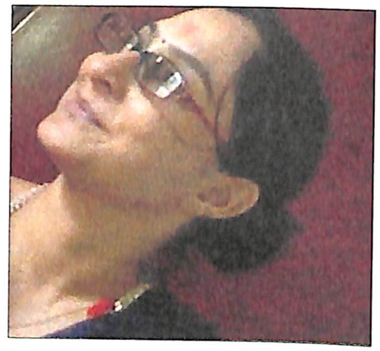
(d) Hence, knowledge is not 'knowing afresh' but 'knowing the known', that is, it is the removal of the veil of ignorance which is defined as imperfect knowledge *(apurṇammanyatā)*

(e) Such a view of reality, apart from its epistemic implications, contains cultural margins of no mean consequence. It has a very optimistic appeal and culminates into deep commitment to life, putting a seal of approval on all that life contains or stands for. This may be termed as a life-affirming attitude of the Tantric culture that makes it a truly humanistic movement where all spiritual pathways form part and represent particular dimensions of an integrated whole *(Pratyabhijñā-hṛdaya, Sūtra* 8) and cease to be isolated events where entire mankind is openly welcomed to the threshold of true wisdom irrespective of caste, creed, gender and status *(Gītārthasaṁgraha* of Abhinavagupta, 9.32). Thus Tagore's tribute that Trika "has penetrated to that living depth of thought where diverse currents of human wisdom unite in a luminous synthesis" (*A Descriptive Analysis of Kashmir Series of Text and Studies*, p.2) is amply borne out

(This is an abstract of the paper presented by Prof. Navjivan Rastogi at International Seminar on Kashmir. Seminar held in New Delhi on May 7, 2007 as part of Swami Lakshmanjoo's birth centenary celebrations. Courtesy: Malini, author and Ishwar Ashram Trust.)

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Aesthetics



A Glimpse into Abhinavagupta's Ideas on Aesthetics

Geetika Kaw Kher

Abhinavagupta, a distinguished philosopher, aesthete and saint was one of the most outstanding Acharyas of Monistic Shaivism. His exact date of birth is not known but we learn from references about him in his works *Tantrāloka* and *Paratrimshika Vivarana* that he lived in Kashmir about the end of the tenth and beginning of the eleventh century A.D. The earliest known ancestor of Abhinavagupta was a famous Brahmin, Attrigupta, a great Shaiva teacher and scholar of Kanauj, who had been invited to settle in Kashmir by King Lalitaditya.

Abhinavagupta was thus born into a family which had a long tradition of scholarship and devoutness for Lord Siva. His father Narasimhagupta (Cukhulaka) and mother Vimalakala were great influences in his life and it is believed that they both underwent austerities to be bestowed with an extraordinary son with spiritual powers.

Traditionally believed to have been a *Yoginibhu* (born of a Yogini), he mastered subjects like metaphysics, poetry and aesthetics at a very young age. He possessed all the eight Yogic powers explained in the *shastras*. His biographers observed six great spiritual signs as explained in '*Malinivijayotara Shastra*', in him. Kashmir Shaivism is classified by Abhinavagupta in four systems viz. *Krama* system, *Spanda* system, *Kula* system and *Pratyabijnya* system. '*Krama*' deals with space and time, '*Spanda*', with movement, '*Kula*' with the Science of Totality and '*Pratyabijnya*' with the School of Recognition (Ref: G.T. Deshpande's monogram on Abhinavagupta).

His two major works on Poetics, *Dhavnyāloka Locana* and *Abhinavabharāti* point towards his quest into the nature of aesthetic experience. In both these works Abhinavagupta suggests that aesthetic experience is something beyond worldly experience and he has used the word *alaukika* to distinguish the former feeling from the mundane latter ones. He subscribed to the theory of *Rasa Dhvani* and thus entered the ongoing aesthetic debate on the nature of aesthetic pleasure.

Rasa - roughly translated as 'emotive aesthetics' - is one of the most important concepts in classical Indian aesthetics, having pervasive influence in the theories of painting, sculpture, dance, poetry, and drama. The *Rasa* Theory argues that the presentation of emotions is the proper object and domain of poetic discourse. Bharata in *Nāṭyaśastra*, his pioneering work on Indian dramatics mentions eight *rasas* and says *rasa* is produced when *Vibhava*, *Anubhava* and *Vyabhichari bhava* come together. *Vibhavanubhava-vyabhicari-samyogat Rasa nispattih (Rasa Sutra, Nāṭyaśastra)*.

Vibhava: A medium through which an emotion arises in an actor e.g., a child riding a stick and enjoying it as if he were actually riding a horse.

Anubhava: All the physical changes arising due to the *vibhavas* e.g., changes in facial expression and body language.

Vyabhichari bhava: Transient emotions e.g., weeping with joy.

The language of feelings is not a private language; it is more a system of symbols, a language game that is understood by those who have learned its conventions and usages. Emotions treated in a poem are neither the projections of the reader's own mental states nor the private feelings of the poet; rather, they are the objective situations abiding in the poem as its cognitive content. *Rasa* is understood as residing in the situational factors presented in an appropriate language. A poet chooses a theme because he sees a certain promise for developing its emotional possibilities and exploits it by dramatizing its details.

The adherents of the *Rasa* Theory believed *rasa* to be the meaning of the poetic sentence but they had different ideas about the definition of art. *Abhinavabharāti*, a commentary on Bharata's *Nāṭyaśastra* talks about these scholars and comments on their theories. Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa believed art to be an imitation of reality. His views were contested by Sri Śaṅkuka who stated that art cannot be an imitation simply because it existed in a different place and time. Further he explained his point of view by giving the analogy of a pictorial horse (*chitaraturaganyaya*). He says when one

sees a horse painted one doesn't mistake it for the original horse but one sees it as the representation of the original horse and thus derives the aesthetic pleasure through this identification. Since art cannot imitate all the qualities of the original subject hence it is just an inference and not an imitation. Bhaṭṭa Tauta, Abhinavagupta's teacher raised a valid question regarding the imitation of the mental state. According to him there is no way an actor can feel and react in exactly the same way as the original character. The actor presents his feelings i.e., how he would react if put in the original character's position. Hence art cannot be inferred but depends on the imagination of the spectator.

Abhinavagupta though in agreement of too many of the suggestions put forward by the *Rasa* Theory also points at its various limitations. According to him art is not just about evoking certain feelings but a real work of art in addition to possessing emotive charge needs to have a strong sense of suggestion and capacity to produce various meanings. This is where he refers to Dhvanivada. He says that for a work of art it is not enough to be having *abhida* (literal meaning) and *laksana* (metaphorical meaning) but it should also possess *vyanjana,* the suggested meaning, which has absolutely nothing to do with the other two levels of meaning. Thus an aesthetic experience cannot be experienced like any ordinary mundane experience. A true aesthetic object does not simply stimulate the senses but also stimulates the imagination of the spectator. Once the imagination is stimulated the spectator aesthete gets transported to a world of his own creation. This emotion de-individualizes an individual by freeing him from those elements which constitute individuality such as place, time etc., and raises him to the level of the universal. Thus art is otherworldly or *alaukika* in its nature.

One of the major passages in which he dwells on *alaukikatva* is:

"When a man hears the words: 'A son is born to you', joy is produced (through the power of denotation - *abhida*). But the suggested sense (*rasa* and the like) is not produced the way joy is produced in the above case. Nor does it come about through the secondary usage (*laksana, gunavrtti, bhakti*). But it arises in a sensitive man (*sahrdaya* - a man who is sensitive to literature) through his knowledge of *vibhavas* and *anubhava*, because of his *hrdaya-samvada* (sympathetic response) and his *tanmayibhava* (identification). It is *vilaksana* (different) from ordinary awareness of happiness etc., and it is not an objective thing."

– Dhvaynāloka Locana, p.79

In this passage he points out clearly that the *vibhavas* do not correspond to any *karana* (reason) in case of art like they do in everyday life. They make the relish of *rasa* possible and hence exist at a different plane altogether.

Abhinavagupta turned his attention away from the linguistic and related abstractions, which had preoccupied even Anandavardhana, focusing his attention instead on the human mind, specifically the mind of the reader or viewer of a literary work. The first step in Abhinavagupta's project involved the recognition that the theory of *Rasa Dhvani,* could not be understood as a theory of abstract linguistic structure. Rather, it only made sense as a theory of the way people respond to literature. In other words, *Rasa Dhvani* had to be conceived in psychological terms. According to this system the reader becomes the central focus of literary criticism. The aim of *kavya* is to give pleasure, but this pleasure must not bind the soul to the body.

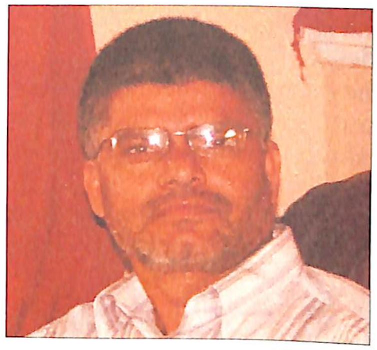
Thus he attributed the state of divinity to the arts and considered *śanta rasa* as the ultimate *rasa*. According to him the pleasure one derives out of a real work of art is no less than divine pleasure. As one has to constantly struggle and detach oneself to reach the Almighty, similarly a true connoisseur of arts has to learn to detach the work from its surroundings and happenings and view it independently… e.g. the feeling that might bring pain in real life is capable of causing pleasure in an art form. The great success of Greek tragedies can be attributed to the pleasure it aroused in the spectators and brought about the emotional catharsis (purging out).

In his *Dhvanyāloka*, Anandavardhana observes: "In the province of poetry (creative literature) obviously standards of truth and falsity have no relevance. Any attempt to find out or discover whether a poem (or any literary composition) is true or false by employing means of valid cognition leads to ridicule alone." Abhinavagupta comments on it: "Such a person will be ridiculed as follows: He is not able or competent to appreciate aesthetic experience or his mind has become (truly) hard by indulging in dry logic."

Thus he asserts that the "willful suspension of disbelief" is a prerequisite for enjoying any art form. The moment one starts questioning it or doubting it and looking at it objectively it loses its charm and status and becomes equivalent to any mundane object. One enjoys a play only when one can identify the character as the character from the drama and not as one's friend or associate. For the time that the drama goes on the character should take over the actor in a spectator's mind i.e., the spectator should rise above the worldly connections and try to experience the supernatural aspect of art which has nothing to do with worldly concerns.

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Hymnology



Contemplating the Image of Bhairava[1]

A Study of Kṣemarāja's *Bhairavānukaraṇastava*

Dr. Sthaneshwar Timalsina

Introduction

Bhairava is the central deity of Kaula Tantrism. In medieval Tantras, *Bhairava* is considered to be the central deity of sixty-four *āgamas*, and while separate Tantric texts are attributed to goddesses such as *Kubjikā*, *Bhairava* resides at the center of the deity *maṇḍala* in many of these traditions. The peculiarity of *Bhairava* as carrying a skull cup, as well as other weapons such as a staff or a trident, helps to relate this deity to the *Kāpālikas*. The shrines of *Bhairava* located near the cremation grounds (most often near the shrines of *Yoginī*, *Cāmuṇḍā*, or *Kālī*), or the deity shown with a dog as his ride further confirms his *Kāpālika* association. *Bhairava*, however, is not merely worshipped by the Tantrics in their esoteric rituals, as the deity is widely revered throughout the pan-Indian continent, with shrines dedicated to him, widely distributed in the Kathmandu Valley, Varanasi, Rajasthan, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu. While the earliest imagery of *Bhairava* appears around the 6th Century, this deity comes to prominence with the rise of the distinctive philosophical school of *Trika* in Kashmir during the 9th-10th centuries. The objective of this paper is to examine one image of *Bhairava*, the *Svacchandabhairava*, as detailed in a text by the Kashmiri Tantric theologian and philosopher *Kṣemarāja* (11th C.), disciple of the prominent Kashmiri philosopher Abhinavagupta.

If we analyze some of the names associated with this deity, *Bhairava* embodies time and death in his emanation of *Kāla*; becomes a ferocious deity called *Caṇḍa*; is in fury, as his name *Krodha* suggests; is aroused, as the name *Unmatta* describes; generates fear, as the name *Bhīṣaṇa* suggests.

With the development of the *Tantric Kaula* and *Trika* systems in Kashmir during 9th-11th centuries, *Bhairava* emerged in a prominent position. Texts dedicated to one or another emanation of *Bhairava* were written, and prominent scholars such as Abhinavagupta composed their texts with *Bhairava* at the center of their liturgy. The available myths and ritual texts relate *Bhairava* to *Śiva*, depicting him as immanent, oriented towards the world with his wide open gaze. Like the many depictions of *Śiva* begging for alms, *Bhairava* is clearly a renunciant, wandering with his skull cup (*kapāla*). Following one myth, *Bhairava* is the manifestation of *Śiva* after he severed one of *Brahmā's* heads and had to beg to redeem himself from the sins of Brahmanicide. This identification of *Bhairava* with *Śiva* has, while making *Śaivism* esoteric, brought *Bhairava* to wider acceptance.

The above-mentioned myth of *Bhairava* lends support to the interpretation of central motifs associated with him, that the skull he carries is the head of *Brahmā*, and that he has turned dark due to the sins he collected in severing the head of *Brahmā*. Although the description found in this myth is widely distributed in *Purāṇic* and *Āgamic* literature, the popular imagination of *Bhairava* does not address *Bhairava* as the central deity that embodies emotions. If we analyze some of the names associated with this deity, *Bhairava* embodies time and death in his emanation of *Kāla*; becomes a ferocious deity called *Caṇḍa*; is in fury, as his name *Krodha* suggests; is aroused, as the name *Unmatta* describes;

1. I am thankful to Dr. Phyllis Granoff, Dr. Jürgen Hanneder, and Mrs. Mary Hicks for reading the earlier drafts, and Mr. Jason Schwartz for library support.

generates fear, as the name *Bhīṣaṇa* suggests; and embodies destructive characteristics, portrayed by the name *Saṁhāra*.

The centrality of *Bhairava* in theological discourse is clearly seen in Abhinava's *Tantrāloka* or *Kṣemarāja's* commentary on *Svacchandatantra*. The image of *Bhairava* as depicted in these texts, however, is not of a deity begging in penance or playing the part of destruction. These texts depict *Bhairava* as the almighty, carrying out all the roles through different emanations. *Bhairava*, in this depiction, is at the center of *maṇḍala*, with the deities surrounding his *maṇḍala* carrying out his command. The origins of this tradition, as Sanderson (1988: 699-701) suggests, are associated with the early cremation ground practices of the *Kāpālikas*. The image of *Svacchandabhairava* as presented by *Kṣemarāja* in his *Bhairavānukaraṇastava* (BAS) transcends earlier depictions of this deity. In the non-dual *Trika* paradigm, *Bhairava* is the supreme reality, embracing all that exists, and is identical to the self. The image of *Bhairava* in this shifted paradigm becomes emblematic of the *yogis* and one's experience of oneself, as '*Bhairava*' is no longer just the name of a deity in this context but a concept to depict the highest state of cosmic awakening, the surge of bliss and consciousness that embodies totality.[2]

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The objective of this paper is to decipher the imagery of *Bhairava* as described in *BAS* by *Kṣemarāja*.[3] According to the *Trika* tradition that *Kṣemarāja* upholds, *Bhairava* stands for both the supreme deity and the state of experience of a *yogin* in the state of highest absorption (*samāveśa*) wherein the *yogin* experiences himself as *Bhairava*. This experience is the culmination of the practice of visualisation in the imagery of *Bhairava*. The experience of non-duality where the self is experienced as identical to the totality of manifestation and also with the deity is cultivated in this visualising process. This process, thus, is an active gaze upon *Bhairava* imagery, relating specific gestures and weapons of *Bhairava* with the central tenets of the *Trika* doctrine. Accordingly, the focus on *Bhairava's* imagery is no longer a mere observation of it, but a conscious and creative gaze where the consciousness of the aspirant is oriented towards non-dual experience while focusing upon the image of the deity as support.

The Image of *Bhairava*

The focus of this paper, as mentioned above, is the image of *Bhairava* detailed in a small treatise, *Bhairavānukaraṇastava* (*BAS*) of *Kṣemarāja*. By bringing to light this work of *Kṣemarāja*, this paper aims to initiate a reading of *Tantric* visual culture in relation to its literary culture. *Tantric* images provide ample examples that support the claim that a society's literary culture at any given time defines and describes the visual culture. In the absence of a proper awareness of *Tantric* literature, interpreting these images and even experiencing their aesthetic modes can be compromised. Historically, an image over time accretes meanings that are found in different systems, and any interpretation needs to keep these integral cultural processes within the conceptual framework. This awareness allows a viewer to enter the heart of the artist and acquire his refined gaze. The interpretive enterprise is not isolated within philosophical texts, with liturgical texts and the manuals for architecture providing a glimpse of the meaning of images as well. By focusing on a single *Tantric* image that is prototypical of many other images, the objective here is to investigate the philosophical foundation of *Tantric* visual culture.

While the argument that *Tantric* images are embedded within an inherent system of signs and can be understood only in light of *Tantras* in particular and the layered philosophical perspectives in general has its own validity, a question begs for an answer: have any of the classical philosophers applied these perspectives to deciphering images? This paper intends to provide textual support for the claim that *Tantric* images have been the repository of meaning since classical times and the process of deciphering meaning has remained integral to ritual visualisation (*dhyāna*), essential to Tantric practice. *BAS* is significant in that this concise treatise reveals the philosophical scaffolding necessary

2. For the gradual stages of self-realisation in *Svacchandatantra*, see Goudriaan 1992, 139-174.
3. *The Bhairavānukaraṇastava of Kṣemarāja*. See Gnoli 1957.

for understanding the central Tantric deity, *Bhairava*.[4]

Kṣemarāja, the foremost disciple of Abhinavagupta (950-1020 CE), contributed greatly to the development of the *Trika* system. That *Kṣemarāja* has a particular relation to *Bhairava* is explicit in his commentarial writings.[5] What is evident in *BAS* is that *Kṣemarāja* treats the image as a text and endeavors to read it in light of *Trika* philosophy. This reading or process of visualisation is for him a means to access self-realisation (*pratyabhijñā*).[6] In light of this, *Kṣemarāja* considers weapons, gestures, and other physical characteristics as meaningful elements of the *Trika* text.

The text begins with the identification of the self with *Bhairava*, ascribing to him aspects of self-awareness. In light of this, the physical gestures, posture, and ornaments are deciphered as instances of cognition and specific feelings. Seeing the body of *Bhairava*, for *Kṣemarāja*, is recognising the self or consciousness actively engaged through the senses in grasping the externals and returning back to the self. For him, the highest realisation does not isolate the self from its engagement in the world. The ever-enfolding and unfolding entity, *Bhairava* or the self, is described here as simultaneously transcendent and immanent. While the essential nature of *Bhairava* is beyond the triad of cognised object, the process of cognition, and the cognising subject, at the same time, he also embodies this triad. The image of *Bhairava* is thus the intermediary ground of form and the formless. *Bhairava*, following this understanding, is the latent force in all manifestation, comparable to the lines that constitute alphabets or images.

This *Bhairava*-awareness is recognised in the heart, with the aspirant seeking identity between his body and that of the deity. Pleasing *Bhairava* thus results in nourishing one's own senses. As the limbs of *Bhairava* parallel those of the practitioner, the attributes of the deity reflect specific modes of the subject engaged in visualisation. *Kṣemarāja* interprets the skull of *Brahmā* as the fivefold power of awareness, bliss, will, knowledge, and action (*BAS* 9). These five energies are visualised as the five *pretas*, and stand for the first five principles (*tattvas*) in the process of emanation, identified as the 'pure path' (*śuddhādhvan*). *Kṣemarāja* interprets the heart, head, tuft, shield, eyes, and weapons of *Bhairava* as six divine attributes, including omnipotence, omniscience, pervasiveness, and so forth (*BAS* 10).

That *Bhairava* embodies paradoxes is vivid in all his gestures and aspects. For instance, the fire and water elements signify poison and *ambrosia*, death and life. Visualised as his attributes, these contradictory elements reside in harmony within *Bhairava* (*BAS* 12). It is noteworthy that the distinctive gesture called '*Bhairavī*' is the gaze that looks outward while remaining fixed within, revealing the nature of *Bhairava* in which paradoxes resolve. This gaze is frequently found in the images of *Bhairava*, indicative of awareness melded together inside and out, harmonising the external world with intrinsic bliss and awareness. *Bhairava* is pure awareness eternally free from duality, while remaining vibrant within and as the world, enjoying objects of the senses. According to *Kṣemarāja*, in holding a skull cup filled with blood, *Bhairava* metaphorically enjoins the practitioner to likewise imbibe the fluids of life in an embrace of sensory pleasure (*BAS* 31). *Bhairava* drinks blood, a metaphor for the self-enjoying life, recognising sensory pleasure as a valid means for entering into the heart of reality. *Bhairava*, as uninterrupted self-awareness, is ever-present, even when the senses are fully engaged with the world (*BAS* 37). The supreme reality, although eternally free, assumes the form of *Bhairava* to demonstrate that one who knows reality is free, even though duality may appear within the phenomenal realm (*BAS* 40). The cremation ground, where *Bhairava* resides, is populated with ghosts and goblins. This, according to *Kṣemarāja*, signifies awareness-in-itself as free from modifications, even

Bhairava is pure awareness eternally free from duality, while remaining vibrant within and as the world, enjoying objects of the senses. According to _Kṣemarāja_, in holding a skull cup filled with blood, _Bhairava_ metaphorically enjoins the practitioner to likewise imbibe the fluids of life in an embrace of sensory pleasure.

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4. The most extensive study update on *Bhairava* is the analytical translation of the *Manthānabhairavatantra* (Dyczkowski 2009). For studies on *Bhairava*, see Pandey 1963; White 1996; Muller-Ortega in Harper and Brown 2002, 213-230; Chalier-Visuvalingam in Hiltebeitel 1989, 157-229.
A small treatise in ten verses by Abhinavagupta, *Bhairavastava*, (see Pandey 1963, 951-52) is another noteworthy text in understanding the significance of *Bhairava* in the Trika lineage of Abhinavagupta-Kṣemarāja.

5. For instance, see his commentaries on *Svacchandatantra* and *Vijñānabhairavatantra*.

6. Kṣemarāja also authored texts entirely dedicated to the philosophical system of pratyabhijñā, such as the *Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya*.

while appearing in the form of segmented cognitive modes signified by the surrounding beings (*BAS* 41). *Bhairava* is the essential nature of awareness-in-itself and the deities surrounding him in his *maṇḍala* express the *mantras*, or words that reveal awareness in all its glory (*BAS* 43). The central deity and the deities in the periphery can be compared with the self and the body, with the senses allowing the self to embrace the reality that is externalised.

Kṣemarāja interprets the garland made of hands and heads as the collection of individual selves that dissolve into *Bhairava's* nature of bliss and awareness (*BAS* 13). *Bhairava* thus is the image of singular self-awareness, where the phenomenal selves are subordinated and become mere objects of ornamentation. Following *BAS* 14, the entrails that *Bhairava* wears and grotesquely displays highlight the bondage of the body. Both what *Bhairava* wears and how he appears as demonstrate specific modes of the self being engaged in the world. For instance, the lion's skin that *Bhairava* wears or stretches taut signifies an illusory and stained state that does not exist in consciousness, devoid of all forms (*BAS* 15).

Bhairava's weapons symbolise the powers that sever bondage and allow the self to manifest in its true nature. The sword of *Bhairava* cuts through the haze of mental agitation that gives rise to instances of cognition (*BAS* 16). The shield the deity wields similarly demonstrates that the devotees of *Bhairava*, armed with his protection, may free themselves from fear (*BAS* 17).

According to *Kṣemarāja*, the rope signifies time, and since *Bhairava*, the deity or self-awareness incarnate, carries it, time is in his grip (*BAS* 18). The hook signifies the reabsorbing aspect of *Bhairava* that dissolves difference (*BAS* 19), leading to the solitary nature of *Bhairava*-awareness. Deities such as *Brahmā* and *Viṣṇu* refer to the divinity manifest within the realm of causation and bound in terms of time. *Bhairava's* bow and arrow demonstrate the reabsorption of the deities that allow the world to manifest (*BAS* 20). The gestures of boon and fearlessness, along the same lines, demonstrate the liberating nature of *Bhairava*, granting release from suffering in the world (*BAS* 21-22).

By carrying the freshly chopped head that signifies illusion, *Bhairava* demonstrates his mastery over it (*BAS* 23). The skull-staff of *Bhairava* signifies that the self is the foundation of creation (*BAS* 24). As the staff of *Bhairava* bears skulls, consciousness, likewise, holds the world manifest in the form of multiple subjects. Another gesture of *Bhairava*, carrying freshly chopped heads by their tufts of hair, confirms this same aspect: awareness in terms of I-sense is manifest in manifoldness (*BAS* 32).

Kṣemarāja interprets the musical instruments of *Bhairava* as mental modifications. The lute, bell, and drum thus refer to three varieties of mental constructions and *Bhairava*, the enlightened self-awareness, demonstrates his control over them (*BAS* 25). In *Kṣemarāja*'s terms, the strand of beads that *Bhairava* holds refers to his pulsating nature that maintains the world through emission and reabsorption by opening and closing the sensory orifices (*BAS* 34). The trident refers to the triadic divinities, *Parā*, *Parāparā*, and *Aparā*, who comprise the fundamental nature of *Bhairava* (*BAS* 26). The bolt, with six spokes, demonstrates the all-pervasive, divine nature that permeates the three different modes of awareness in the form of subject, object, and cognition (*BAS* 27). Other weapons, such as the stick that *Bhairava* wields, demonstrate his control over the world (*BAS* 28), while the club and axe signify the power that shatters difference (*BAS* 29). By holding a citron (*bījapūra*), *Bhairava* identifies consciousness as the seminal nature of the cognised world (*BAS* 33).

Bhairava wears severed hands and bones smeared with blood, demonstrating that the world is nonetheless pure, because even the most impure elements are fundamentally of the nature of *Brahman* (*BAS* 35). *Bhairava's* nudity, along these lines, stands for his eternally free nature that never undergoes suffering caused by limitation (*BAS* 38). The dark-blue color of *Bhairava's* body refers to his all-reabsorbing nature (*BAS* 39), dissolving all light and manifestation into his deep hue. *Bhairava's* third eye shows that those who are merged within the bliss of self-awareness perceive that the pleasure obtained through sensory objects is futile, as external objects are momentary, like bubbles on the surface (BAS 36). In *Kṣemarāja's* cosmology, *Bhairava's* image itself is 'the seal', an unmistakable symbol that grants the bliss of self-awareness and liberates the aspirant from the notion of difference that is rooted in the world (*BAS* 44-45).

Kṣemarāja concludes the *BAS* by highlighting that this visualisation results in self-realisation even when senses are engaged with their particular objects (*BAS* 47). The purpose of this hymn is thus to experience this shimmering self-awareness even when difference appears in terms of cognised objects and instances of mental modification (*BAS* 48). Following this depiction, *Bhairava* realisation is the most exalted *Tantric* experience, as it embraces the world while experiencing non-duality.

Visualisation of *Bhairava* is thus a means to recognise the self that in essence is awareness itself. Encountering an image, along these lines, is in itself the liberating experience where what is seen and the perceiver become one. Since *Bhairava* is identical to his manifestation, the world, being in the world becomes a metaphor for the

divine presence. The hymns of *BAS* are thus the image of *Bhairava*. The words describe an image and the image is deciphered through language. The speech, found in the form of prayer, culminates in deciphering the divine image or that which is real, and thus is able to touch upon reality and not merely the mental constructs. In the non-dual gaze of *Bhairava*, the manifest world in terms of language and meaning depicts two modes of the same awareness, assuming embodiment.

What is the significance of the image of *Bhairava*? The above description has portrayed *Bhairava* as the essence of *Trika* doctrine, an embodiment of self-realisation. However, if we dissociate the philosophical foundations of *Kṣemarāja*, is there an independent meaning to the image? This is a thorny question and requires a different treatment, as the question requires further clarification of 'meaning'. One truism can be asserted, that any conscious act generates and embodies meaning. Things perceived in the background, a passive perception, may not have any meaning associated with it, but the moment we bring an entity to our awareness, we constitute meaning. *Kṣemarāja* consciously utilises this meaning-making aspect of consciousness for transforming his vision towards the world, the divine, and the self.

The objective of this visualisation, as summed up by Muller-Ortega (2002) is 'becoming *Bhairava*'. While being aware of the body and the cosmos and thus retaining the gesture identified as *Bhairavī*, the aspirant seeks to find his self-awareness as merged within the cosmic experience of *Bhairava*. Bringing an image to mind, or the ritual of visualisation, thus culminates in transforming experience, where the subject shifts the notion regarding the self from a bound and suffering individual to the one at the center of the wheel of *Śaktis*, simultaneously transcendent and immanent, enjoying the worldly presence while retaining awareness of the absolute. *Kṣemarāja's* approach of deciphering the imagery is merely one step towards retaining this experience.

Bhairavānukaraṇastava[7]
Hymns in Imitation of Bhairava

Oṁ namas cidbhairavāya
Salutations to Bhairava of the nature of consciousness

1. citibhūmi samāśrayaṇāścitibhūtiṁ śrayatamāmudhābhramata |
prathayanna itibhaktimatāṁ jayatiśivo 'nugrahapravaḥ | |
Manifesting [the highest wisdom] to those filled with devotion [with the instruction], "Those of you taking refuge in the foundation of consciousness! Rest on the glory of consciousness [and] do not wander in vain," victorious is Śiva, skilled in bestowing grace.

2. cidbhairavamevaparaṁ paramāmṛtarūpaṁ ekamatidīptam |
ullasitakaraṇacakra grasta samastaṁ śivaṁ vande | |
I bow to Śiva, the supreme Bhairava of the character of consciousness, solitary, of the form of supreme nectar, radiant, [and] who has devoured the entire [existence] with the realm of senses streaming out [to their corresponding objects].

3. stutyaḥ stotā stutir itiyad api vibhinnaṁ na kiñcidastīha |
mṛśatiyathāyadrūpaṁ cidrūpatayā tathābhavatyetat | |
There exists nothing here that is distinguished as the [deity] that is prayed, the subject that prays, and the prayer. In whichever form one mentally touches, this [Bhairava-awareness] manifests in that form, since [it is] of the form of awareness [itself].

4. vigalitasarvavibhedaṁ sarvavibhedātma cidgaganānandaṁ |
yat tava tattvaṁ bhagavaṁs tasyānukṛtiṁ tvadākṛtiṁ vande | |

7. This translation relies on Gnoli's (1958) reading of the manuscript, except as indicated in the footnotes.

Lord, I bow to your image that is in imitation of your true nature of the form of bliss and the [formless] void of consciousness, which, although the essence of all differences, in truth, is devoid of all differences.5

5. rekhāpuruṣaḥ puruṣaṁ varṇalipirvarṇasañcayaṁ yadavat |
tadvad vicitra rūpaṁ tvāmākārovyanaktiparamātman | |

Supreme self! [Just] as a sketch of a person suggests [the real] person, [and] the lines indicating alphabets identify the real phonemes, in the same way, the image manifests you having innumerable forms.

6. tatrāvikalpam evatvāṁ cidrūpaṁ samāviśya |
vimṛśāmaḥ kimapi manāṅ nahi tattvaṁ kalpanāviṣayaḥ | |

The supreme reality is not at all the object of imagination. We experience whatever [we do] having entered your essential nature of consciousness that is devoid of mental constructions.

7-8. svātmaprabhāṁ vidhāyavāgdevīṁ viṣayakusuma klṛptārcaḥ |
prathamonmeṣaṁ gurum atha vanditvā hṛdayamāviśya | |
staumi vimṛśan maheśvaramātmānaṁ svaṁ cidekaghanam |
srāvitapāśa kadambakam etasmin deha devagṛhe | |

I extol the supreme lord while experiencing my very self, the mass of consciousness alone, with the collection of ties dissolved by assuming the effulgence of the self as the goddess of speech [Sarasvatī] and having worshipped [her] by assuming the objects [of experience] as the flowers [to offer], having bowed to the preceptor, the first flash [of awareness], [and] having entered the heart.

9. cityānandecchāvitkaraṇākhyāḥ śaktyato jayanti vibho |
sūkṣma sthūlabhidāptāvaktratvaṁ Brahmamuṇḍabhidā | |

The omnipresent one! Victorious are [your] powers called awareness, bliss, will, cognition, and action [that are] distinguished as the heads of Brahmā, having assumed the faces with the distinction of subtle and gross [forms].

10. sarvajñatādiviṣayaṁ hṛdayādikamangaṣaṭkam te |
sakalaṁ sadāśivāntaṁ pretātmatayā tavāsanaṁ svāmin | |

Lord! The heart [and so forth] that corresponds to omnipresence and so forth are your six limbs. Since all [entities] up to Sadāśiva are of the character of the dead [or within the realm of death, and so constitute] your seat.

11. paramaprakāśavapuṣo vimarśaśktiḥ prabho parādevī |
asyāeva prasaraḥ sarvābrāhmyādikādevyaḥ | |

Lord! The goddess Parā is the power of reflection [of the self] that has the body of the supreme light [or consciousness]. All the goddesses such as Brāhmī are her emanations.

12. dahanajalāmṛta lekhāviṣādi bibhrat tvamādiśyasyetat |
viśvaṁ virudhdamapi saccidrūpemayivirudhyat enaitat | |

By carrying fire and water, or [by] the flow of nectar and poison, you instruct that, although the world is [comprised of] conflicting [natures], this world (*etat*) does not conflict in me, [being] of the nature of being and consciousness [alone].

13. saṁ vitsūtranilīnoniḥ sāromātṛnivaho 'yam |
karamuṇḍamālabhārindarśayasītīvanaḥ svāmin | |

Lord! You as if show us by wearing the rosary of hands and heads that this mass of cognising subjects threaded into awareness is devoid of essence [in itself].

14. paśyatapaśyatapāśāviṣamās ta ime bahiskṛtāḥ śaśvat |

ityantradhāraṇamiṣātkathayaṁ stvaṁ naḥ samābhāsi | |

You appear to be telling us, by the gesture of wearing entrails, that say,'look, look, I have removed these bonds (*pāśa*) which are hard to break'.

15. *māyāpaṭaḥa sarāgo vyomni pare 'sminsaeṣanikṣiptaḥ* |
iti gajacarma saraktaṁ mūrdhni vahankathayasīśa | |

Lord! By carrying an elephant hide covered with blood on your head, you tell [us] that the garment of illusion accompanied with passion [and other emotions] is expelled from the supreme void [of consciousness].

16. *antaḥśakti kṛpāṇīṁ vyanakṣi saṁsṛti vibhedinīmasinā* |
nijaśaktimahimasvīkṛtasamastaviśvā hi vīravarā | |

By the sword, you demonstrate the inner sword of power, which cuts [the illusion of] creation. Victorious are those who have embraced the entire world by the glory of one's own power.

17. *bhavabhayahantā so 'haṁ sānāthye 'vaśthito 'smimābhaiṣṭa* |
ityāsphoṭitakheṭakadarśanatodiśasinaḥ svāmin | |

Our lord! In displaying the shield making sound striking on the arms, you instruct [us] that "fear not, I am your assistance, I am the destroyer of the fear of transmigration (*bhava*)".

18. *nija śaktipāśavalitaścidvapuṣākalyate mayā kālaḥ* |
itipāśadhāraṅvaśātprathayasi naḥ kālakālastvam | |

In carrying a rope, you who subdue even death or time (*kālakāla*), show us that time or death (*kāla*) that is surrounded by the bondage of its own powers is constrained by you with your body of [pure] consciousness.

19. *bhedamayam akhilametannijaśaktyaivākṣipāmi saṁhartuṁ* |
ityaṇkuśadhāraṇataḥ sphuṭa yatiparabhairavo 'smākam | |

By carrying a hook, our supreme Bhairava reveals that He dispels with His own powers all of this comprised of distinctions in order to dissolve them [in the essential nature of the self].

20. *kodaṇḍārūḍha śarapradarśanā brahmaviṣṇurudreśān* |
sasadākhyaśivāñchaktyā kāraṇa hariṇān bhinatsi mṛgavattvam | |

[You suggest] by displaying an arrow taut within the bow that you with your [infinite] power slay the creator beasts, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Īśvara, and Sadāśiva.

21. *varadena pāṇinā tvaṁ viśvavibhūti pradatvamabhinayasi* |
na khalu paratattvaniṣṭho vibhavamalaiḥ spṛśyatejātu | |

With [your] hand [displaying the gesture] of boons, you play the role of bestowing prosperity on the world. One abiding in the supreme reality cannot be touched by the defilements of coming into being [birth].

22. *abhayena ca bhavabhayāniunmūlayatā prakāśyate satatam* |
viśvānugrahakāraṇa svabhāvatā tava karatalena | |

Your hand [gesture] of fearlessness constantly displays your nature of showering [grace] upon the world by having obliterated the fear of coming into being.

23. *akhyātirūpam asamaṁ māyāyāḥ śakalitaṁ śiro 'traitat* |
parabodhamayena māyāmuṇḍaṁ[8] *bibhrat prakāśayasyevam* | |

In clutching a head that signifies illusion, you show that this head [referring to limited Pramātṛ] here is a fragmented

8. Gnoli has read the text as, '*māyāmuṇḍam*'

part of illusion, uneven and of the character of not revealing the real nature (*akhyāti*) [that is carried by] supreme realisation.

24. niḥśeṣa hṛtasārā mayyeva jagat sthitiścidekaghane |
iti khaṭvāṅgakaraṁkodvāhanacchalato dadāsyājñām | |
With the stance of wielding the skull staff, you declare that the sustenance of the world whose entire essence has been dissolved is within you, the mass of consciousness alone.
25. vīṇā ghaṇṭā ḍamarūn uḍḍāmara vādayannidaṁ diśāsi |
vṛtti tribhedabhinnaṁ nādaṁ śṛṇvansthito 'smīti | |
In playing a lute, bell, and a loud drum, you show that you are resting [while] listening to the sound divided into three distinct forms of mental modifications (*vṛtti*) [of the forms of waking, dreaming, and dreamless states].

26. kiñca parādikaśakti tritayārāsundarāṁ mahāśaktim |
devānukaroṣi bahistriśūladhāraṇam iṣeṇa nityaṁ tvam | |
Moreover, by the external gesture of carrying a trident, you constantly imitate the supreme Śakti [who is] decorated [with a wheel] with the spokes comprised of three Śaktis including Parā.

27. icchādika nijaśakti prakāśitādhastha gocara tritayām |
svāmevaparāṁ śaktiṁ vajramayīṁ vahasiṣaḍarāṁ tvam | |
You hold your own supreme power comprised of the bolt that has six spokes [or aspects] that has the lower three objects of senses manifest by [three energies] beginning with will which are the powers of the self.

28. jagadakhilaṁ macchaktyādamitaṁ sarvavyāvasthitirdhatte |
iti daṇḍadhāraṇa vaśād vyanakṣi cidabhairavāsmākam | |
Our Bhairava of the nature of awareness! You demonstrate by wielding a stick that the entire sustenance of the whole world rests within the control of your power.

29. mudgara paraśūbibhrad baindava nādānukāra rūpau tvam |
bhedavibhedanāśakalana para tvam īśāna nirdiśasi | |
Lord! You demonstrate your orientation towards shattering difference by carrying a hammer and axe that imitate the drop (*bindu*) and sound (*nāda*).

30. darśana bhedāt svāmin nanyānyāmākṛtiṁ[9] *dadhānastvam |*
bhairava parabodhamayaṁ prathayasi nijadhāma sarvatra | |
Lord! While assuming different forms [to accommodate] differences in [people's] viewpoints, you manifest your abode of the nature of Bhairava comprised of supreme awareness in all [of these forms].

31. śāktāṇḍa khaṇḍa madhye viśvarasāḥ sarvamahaṁ pibāmi sadā |
vyañjayasi narakapāla garudhiramiṣād etad iva me 'ntaḥ | |
In holding the human skull cup filled with blood, you suggest in my heart that you as if always drink the essences [of the world] found in the middle of the cosmic Śakti-egg.

32. abhimāna hṛdaya bandhānutkhātau tāvimau saśikhau |
mūrtāviva muṇḍābjau prathayandhatse mahākālaḥ | |
Mahākāla! You carry the lotus [upside down by its stalk] like a head [held] by its tuft [of hair], demonstrating as if [it is] the materialised bondage [of *māyā* and *karma*] accompanied by the limited ego [*āṇava mala*], all of which have been eradicated.

9. I have read *ākṛti* instead of *āhṛti*

33. akhilajagadbīja bhuvaṁ prathamashāmanukaroṣi bodhanidhe |
karatalaga bījapūraka darśana līlāyitād deva[ḥ] | |
Lord! Ocean of awareness! You demonstrate the seminal form of the entire world in its primordial [state] by the gesture of holding citron fruit with your hand.

34. bhairavarūpo 'pyasi yat tatrāpi kare 'kṣamālikāṁ dhatse |
tat sarvākṣa vikāsād viśvaṁ parivartayasyantaḥ | |
Although you are of ferocious [Bhairava] form, you nonetheless carry counting beads. With this (*tat*), you change the entire world by engaging all the senses outwards.

35. asthi karamuṇḍamālā bhaṣmābharaṇo nṛrakta ruciḥ |
viśvaṁ brahmamayatvācchuddhamitīśaḥ samādiśasi | |
Lord! By wearing bones and the rosary made of hands and heads, and shining with the human blood, you instruct that the world is pure because it is of the nature of Brahman.

36. svātmārāmam ayānāṁ viṣamā 'pi viṣayabudbudāḥ kimamī |
smaradahana malika nayanaṁ prathayan paramāgnirūpamādiśasi | |
You instruct by opening wide (√*prath*) the eye on your forehead of the nature of fire that incinerates the lord of desire that, for those who are enjoying [their] own [limited] self, although the bubbles of these objects are uneven, nonetheless, are of no significance.

37. antarnibaddha lakṣaḥ pravikāsikaraṇo 'pi yat sadā bhavasi |
tat prathayasi sarvadaśaṁ gatamoha kalaṅkamātmānam | |
As you always have your attention fixed within, even when the senses are spread out, you demonstrate that your self-nature is of the character of awareness, free from afflictions (*moha*) and limiting adjuncts (*kalā*) in all the states.

38. deva digambara tātevadati nirāvaraṇam ātmanorūpam |
paramabrahma mayārkān māyāvaraṇaṁ kathaṁ vṛṇūyāt | |
Lord! Your [acceptance of] the sky as raiment speaks of the nature of the self, free from limitations. How could the rays of supreme Brahman be veiled by illusion?

39. saṁhartā sarveṣām arkādīnāmahaṁ tamobhūmiḥ |
nirmala śāradagagana prabheṇa vapuṣeti darśayasi | |
You demonstrate by the body of the hue of the cloudless autumn sky that you, the dark foundation, are the destroyer of all [celestial bodies] such as the sun.

40. paramabrahmamayastvaṁ deva yadāśrayasi bhairavākāram |
tat prathayasi tattvajñaḥ satyāpi bhedevimuktaiti | |
Lord! As you are of the nature of supreme Brahman but still assume the form of Bhairava, you demonstrate that one who knows the reality is liberated even when there is difference.

41. vividha śmaśānamālā vetālāvṛtaḥ prakāśayase |
saṁvitti viṣayakalanām adhyaścitibhairavo 'smīti | |
Having been surrounded by the goblins in the circle of cremation grounds, you demonstrate that you are the Bhairava of the nature of consciousness, abiding at the center of consciousness streaming towards objects.

42. tvayyevāmṛtalekhāparaśaktimayīparapramātātaḥ |

nāthatvamevajagatāṃjīvanamitibhāsi no hṛdaye | |
Lord! You are endowed with the flow of nectar of the form of supreme power, [and] you are the highest among the cognising selves (*pramātṛ*), and so you appear in our heart that you are the life of the [entire] world.

43. *tavaśabdarāśivapuṣaḥpratyaṣṭakamevabāhyaparivāraḥ* |
parasūkṣmādivibhedādbhairavalokeśvarapramukhāḥ | |
Bhairava! There are external [circles of] family in every group of eight [phonemes] of your body comprised of the mass of phonemes, with an initial Lokeśvara following the distinction of the transcendent, subtle, and [gross] forms.

44-45. *mudrayatinikhilametanniśeṣasvasvarūpasaṅkramaṇāt* |
modayatibhaktavargaṃgatimudaṃpūrṇatāprathanāt | |
mocayatipāśajālaṃdrāvayatibhedamīśatemūrtiḥ |
mudrayatividhasaṃviddraviṇaṃmudrātataḥkathitā | |
Lord! Your image is considered the seal for the reasons that [1] it affirms all the visible world (*etat*) by transcending the entire forms, [2] it delights the circle of devotees having bliss as their abode (*gati*), [3] it liberates from the net of bondage and dissolves differences, and [4] seals the wealth of gold in the form of various modes of consciousness.

46. *jayatiparatattvabhūmipravarenipāda*[10] *bhūtaiṣā* |
sphuṭamadhivasatusatattvaprathayāhṛdayasyameyamalam | |
Victorious is this [image of yours (*mūrtti*)] that is the lower ground for the stage of the supreme reality. Let this [image of yours] purify the defilements of the heart by vividly manifesting the reality.

47. *pratikalamudetisaṃvidyākilatatrasphuratyadhoviśvam* |
śivaśaktivibhavarūpaṃjānantimaheśayāgasthāḥ | |
Supreme Lord! The entire world manifests within the consciousness that arises in every moment. Those engaged in the [inner] sacrifice realise that [this entire manifestation is] of the essence of the glory of Śiva and Śakti.

48. *itthaṃsphurasisadā me cidbhairavasarvabhūtātma* |
tadyāgādijapāntamsaṃpannamayatnataḥsarvam | |
Bhairava, of the nature of consciousness! The self of all beings! You always appear to me in this way. [And due to this] all [the rituals starting from] your worship to the recitation of the *mantras* have been accomplished without any effort.
iti śrīmahāmāheśvarācārya śrīkshemarāja viracitaṃ bhairavānukaraṇastotraṃsamāptam | |
Thus completes the hymns in imitation of Bhairava composed by Mahāmaheśvara Kṣemarāja.

10. I have read 'nipāya' as 'nipāda'.

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Philosophy



Abhinavagupta and the Concept of Ignorance in Kashmir Shaivism

Prof. Debabrata Sensharma

Ignorance is a truth that all human beings perceive in their life in this world. All schools of Indian philosophical thought take cognizance of its existence in man and discuss its nature as they see it, recognizing that ignorance is universally perceived to be the cause of man's bondage in his mundane life. A brief survey of the conceptualization of ignorance by some representative orthodox schools of Indian philosophy on the nature of ignorance will help in assessing the unique contribution made to the subject by the most illustrious exponent of Kashmir Shaivism, Abhinavagupta. We shall begin our study with an examination of how the *Nyāya* and *Vaiśeṣika* schools conceived it, because these two schools have been assigned the lowest position in the hierarchy of the schools of Indian philosophy by a well-known Advaita Shaiva writer, Kshemaraja, in his *Pratyabhijñahṛdayam* (Sutra 8), where he says: *tadbhūmikaḥ sarvadarśana sthitayaḥ*, 'the positions of the various systems of philosophy are only that'. The *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* writers conceptualise ignorance to be merely negation or absence of knowledge in the percipient subject. Thus, ignorance is, in their view, a negative concept which can be eliminated by acquisition of knowledge: *duḥkha-janma-pravṛtti-doṣa mityajñānānam uttarāpaye* (*Nyāya sūtra* 1.1.2, and the *Nyāya bhāṣya* thereon, 15). The Sāṁkhya and the Patañjali Yoga schools look upon ignorance as the resultant of the lack of discriminatory wisdom (*viveka-jñāna*) in the percipient subject between the sentient (*chetana*) *Puruṣa* and the insentient material (*jaḍa*) *Prakṛti* (cf. SK vs. 64, p. 476 ff, and Vachasapati Misra's commentary thereon). The lack of discriminatory knowledge between these two ultimate components of creation, spirit and matter produces confusion in the mind of the percipient subject, culminating in the false superimposition of the characteristics of the material *Prakriti* on the spiritual *Puruṣa*. It is obvious that the dualistic Sāṁkhya-Yoga School's theory of ignorance is positive in character, as opposed to the pluralistic *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* viewpoint, and that ignorance can be destroyed by developing its opposite, discriminatory wisdom, between the two, *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*. The Shankara Vedāntins conceive of two forms of ignorance, namely, cosmic ignorance (*samaṣṭi* or *mūla ajñāna*), and individual ignorance (*vyaṣṭi* or *tūla ajñāna*), though their nature and content are held to be identical in essence: *idamajñānam samṣṭi-vyaṣti abhiprāyena ekamanekam ca vyavahṛyate* (VS 76). Cosmic ignorance plays a crucial role in the manifestation of the phenomenal world, while individual ignorance leads to a distorted vision of Reality, thereby causing bondage. Ignorance has been described by the Advaita Vedantins as neither existent (*sat*) on account of its being sublated by the dawn of true knowledge in the individual being, nor non-existent (*asat*), as it is experienced by all individuals on the mundane plane; it, therefore, is indescribable (*anirvacanīya*) in positive or negative terms: *ajñānam sadasadbhyam nirvacanīyam triguṇātmakam jñāna-virodhī bhāva-rūpam* (ibid 73). Ignorance here has only a phenomenal existence; as soon as one succeeds in elevating oneself to the trans-phenomenal level, ignorance disappears from the experiential horizon of the individual being once and for all.

Against this background of the views of the other orthodox schools, let us now examine the Advaita Shaiva concept of ignorance as conceived by the Advaita Shaiva writers of Kashmir. The earliest references to the concept of ignorance are the two aphorisms in the *Śivasūtra* revealed to Vasugupta, the founder of the Advaita Shaiva School in Kashmir. The two identically worded *sūtras* read thus: *jñānam bandhaḥ* (*Śivasūtra* 3.2). Kshemaraja, Abhinavagupta's foremost disciple, says that the word *jñānam* actually signifies in this context vitiated, or limited, knowledge, which is tantamount to ignorance (*ajñāna*) (*Śivasūtra Vimarśinī* 3.2). This

ignorance lies at the root of the bondage of the individual being. When he is enveloped by defilement (*mala*), technically called *āṇavamala* (i.e. *mala* caused by the limitation imposed on the self by the Supreme Lord), then the individual does not experience his true divine nature on account of his being limited and contracted by this self-created limitation or *āṇavamala*. This lack of knowledge about his true nature is labeled ignorance. Kshemaraja interprets the word *jñānam* as occurs in the *Śivasūtra* (3.2) as signifying the knowledge of the self-produced in the *citta* (internal sense organ, equivalent to *antaḥkaraṇa*) in the form of its modification (*citta-vritti*) (SSV 128). Since the *citta* is universally acknowledged as of the nature of the three *guṇas*, pleasure (*sattva*), pain (*rajas*) and stupefaction (*tamas*), the knowledge produced in it bears all the characteristics of empirical knowledge. For instance, it implies the experience of duality between subject and object, as also infinite multiplicity. The knowledge arising in the *citta* involving two distinct poles of experience, the knower and the known, is instrumental in the experient's bondage. He is then subject to transmigration in the world. Kshemaraja quotes a verse from the *Tantrasadbhāva*, now lost, in his commentary, the *Śivasutra-vimarśinī*: "Confined to *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* (the three *guṇas*), and knowing only that (object of knowledge) which the senses can seize, the embodied being wanders about in the world, moving from one body to another" (*ibid*).

Abhinavagupta adds another dimension to the Advaita Shaiva conception of ignorance by postulating two distinct kinds of ignorance as existing on two different levels in the personality of embodied beings. These are spiritual ignorance and intellectual ignorance, or *pauruṣa ajñāna* and *bauddha ajñāna* respectively. He describes the salient features in the *Tantrāloka* (*Sadānanda* in VS 1.22-23) and the *Tantrasāra* (*āhnika* I).

According to him, as the Supreme Lord Paramashiva imposes limitations (*sañkoca*) on Himself of His free will (*svecchaya*) to become the universe consisting of an infinite number of subjects (*pramāta*), objects of experience (*prameya*), etc., which indeed are only His self-manifest forms on the mundane plane. His self-experience of His absolute nature (*viṣvottīrṇa rūpa*), in the form of absolute I- experience, or *pūrṇahantā*, ceases. This self-experience of the Supreme Lord is thus named because it expresses his fullest nature (*paripūrṇa svabhāva*). When the Supreme Lord is said to voluntarily assume limitation (*sañkoca*) to become the world, a split is created, as it were, in his self-experience (*svātma-parāmarśa*) as a result of which he begins experiencing Himself in the first instance as the exponent or subject symbolized by *aham* (I-experience), and the void (*śūnya*), and then subsequently as the exponent or the subject (*aham*) and the object of experience (*idam*, or not-self appearing to fill up the void or *śūnya*, as it were). All this happens in the course of the Supreme Lord's involution (*avaroha*) as the universe.

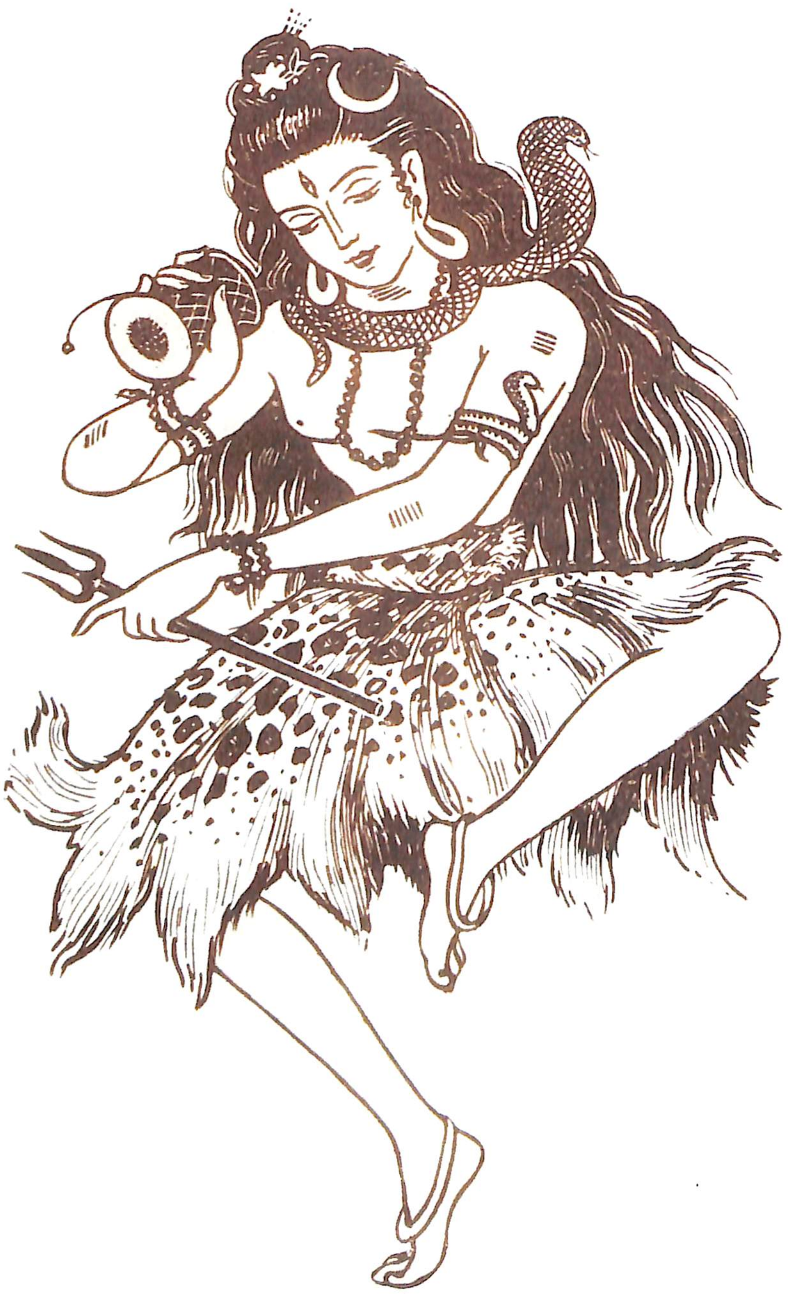
It is held that the notion of not-self (*idam*) appears for the first time in His self-experience (*parāmarśa*), which then is experienced by him only as His self-extended form (*sphāra*), not different from him. His 'truncated' self-experience, as *aham* (I-experience) instead of *pūrṇahanta* (integral I-experience), caused by His voluntary act of self-limitation (*ātma-sañkoca*) resulting in the appearance of *idam* or not-self in the background of I-experience, Abhinavagupta designates by the term *pauruṣa ajñāna* (spiritual ignorance). Abhinava defines *pauruṣa ajñāna* as *atmani anātmabodha*, or the experience of not-self (*anātma uridam*) in the self (*ātma*). The locus of this self-experience is the percipient subject's mirror of consciousness (*citta-darpaṇa*), with the consciousness serving as the reflecting medium for all his self-experiences. Since this self-experience is produced prior to the creation of *citta* or intellect, during the manifestation of the world, it is held to be beyond the reach of the *citta* or the intellect. Abhinavagupta, therefore, posits that *pauruṣa ajañāna*, or spiritual ignorance, being an offshoot of the Supreme Lord's act of assuming limitation in the course of His self-manifestation as the universe, cannot be eradicated by a limited embodied individual through his personal efforts in the form of practice of spiritual discipline (*sādhana*). Ignorance can be destroyed only by the Supreme Lord through the infusion of His grace into His form of the embodied individual, technically called *śaktipāta*.

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The second kind of ignorance, *bauddha ajñāna* (intellectual ignorance), is created in the intellect or *buddhi* upon the Supreme Lord's being enveloped by *māyā*, and residual impressions of *karma* floating in the sphere of *māyā*, called *māyīyamala* and *kārmamala*, in the course of His self-manifestation as the universe. Abhinavagupta describes *bauddha ajñāna* as experience in the form of self in the not-self (*anātmani-ātmabodha*). It is said that the Supreme Lord, existing on the mundane level in the form of a spiritual monad following His act of self-limitation, is enveloped by *māyīyamala* (defilement in the form of *māyā*), with his self-experience as pure subject (*aham*) becoming completely concealed, allowing only his experience of not-self (*idam*) to remain unaffected by the veil of *māyā* (*māyīyamala*). This happens on the level just below the *śuddha vidyā tattva* in the sphere of *māyā*. A vacuum is created in the self-experience of the subject once again after eclipse of the I-experience (*aham*).

Since worldly transactions are not possible in the absence of a subject or agent, the Supreme Lord, in the course of his self-manifestation as the universe, creates the experience of the subject by superposing the experience of the empirical subject on the not-self (*idam* or *anātma*). As a consequence of this super-imposition, ego-experience (*ahaṁkāra*) is created, which takes place in the intellect of the embodied individual. Since the ego-experience is created on the mundane level solely for carrying out worldly transactions, Abhinavagupta treats it as a conceptual one (*vaikalpika*), with the intellect of the individual being its locus.

Abhinavagupta therefore holds intellectual ignorance responsible for the creation of ego-experience. As such, it cannot be gotten rid of until and unless the experience of the self in the real self (*ātmani ātmabodha*) arises in the intellect of the individual being. He calls this experience the spiritual knowledge (*pauruṣa jñāna*) that arises in the spiritual seeker with the annihilation of *āṇavamala* as a consequence of infusion of Divine Grace, *śaktipāta*, in the embodied individual. The practice of spiritual discipline cannot accomplish this task. Hence, *śaktipāta*, or the descent of Divine Grace, is invested with so much importance by Advaita Shaiva writers, especially Abhinavagupta.



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Aesthetic Theory



Abhinavagupta's Aesthetics and the Concept of Camatkāra

Niraj Kumar

Abhinavagupta (10-11th Century AD) was a true genius and polymath who synthesised various strands of Indian thinking. He was a great yogi, philosopher, and master of poetics. Abhinavagupta inherited multiple traditions of knowledge through a large number of gurus mentioned in his magnum opus, *Tantrāloka*. In this brief paper, his work on poetics will be discussed and to situate his ideas on aesthetic experience vis-à-vis spiritual experience.

Abhinavagupta's major works on Sanskrit poetics are *Locana*, a commentary on Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka* and *Abhinavabhāratī*, a commentary on Bharata Muni's *Nāṭyaśāstra*. *Locana* was written before *Abhinavabhāratī* as there are references about the latter in the former. Abhinavagupta mentions Utpala as his *paramaguru* in poetics. He also quotes his teachers Bhaṭṭa Tauta and Bhaṭṭa Induraja in both *Locana* and *Abhinavabhāratī*. Bhaṭṭa Tauta is credited with the work *Kāvya Kautuka* on which Abhinavagupta wrote a commentary. But, Abhinavagupta seems to be influenced by the triple formulations of Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka in *Hṛdayadarpaṇa*, which appears to have touched deeply his own penchant for *Trika* philosophy.

Dhvani has three aspects – abhidhā, the literal meaning of the expression, 'lakṣaṇā', the external characteristic of the expression indicative of something deeper like the metaphor, and vyañjanā, the implicative or the suggested meaning. One arrives at the suggested meaning either through abhidhā or lakṣaṇā.

Before Ānandavardhana, there were three schools in the field of criticism. *Alaṁkāra* and *Rīti* School in poetics and the *Rasa* School of Bharata in dramaturgy. Bhāmaha's *Kavyālaṁkāra* is considered the first work of the *Alaṁkāra* School. For Bhāmaha, poetry is '*śabdārthau sahitau kāvyam*' or words and their meaning, properly matched. Bhāmaha considered *vakratva* (deviation from ordinary mode of expression) as the best ornament of poetry. The *Alaṁkāra* School was further developed by Dandin. The *Rīti* School was developed by Vāmana. Bharat Muni is credited with systemising the *Rasa* School in his magnum opus, the *Nāṭyaśāstra* (4-5th century A.D.). The theory of *rasa* was discussed systemically by Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭṭa, Śankuka and Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka before Abhinava, all of them belonging to Kashmir.

According to the Indian literary tradition, there are different layers of meanings in any literary work. These are, the literal (*śabdārtha*), the indicative (*lakṣaṇā*/ metaphoric) and the purportive (*tātparya*). But, the *dhvani* theorists asserted that there was an implicit meaning (*vyañgyārtha*) in every work of literature and art.

Dhvani has three aspects - *abhidhā*, the literal meaning of the expression, '*lakṣaṇā*', the external characteristic of the expression indicative of something deeper like the metaphor, and *vyañjanā*, the implicative or the suggested meaning. One arrives at the suggested meaning either through *abhidhā* or *lakṣaṇā*. *Abhidhā* and *lakṣaṇā* are the means and *vyañjanā* is the end in poetic expression. Ānandavardhana in his *Dhvanyāloka* takes up three main types of suggested sense, namely *vastu dhvani*, *alaṁkāra dhvani*, and *rasa dhvani*. In *vastu dhvani*, some rare fact or idea is implied. In *alakṁkāra dhvani* some *alaṁkāra* or figure of speech is suggested. In *rasa dhvani*, only *rasa* is evoked. *Rasa dhvani* can never be expressed in the direct meaning of

words.

For Ānanadavardhana, 'the soul of poetry is *dhvani*'. He explains the predominance of *dhvani* in poetry by means of its analogy to *lāvaṇya* or physical charm:

'The word power of the poet in a poem has an overall charm just as a young woman has an overall charm not discernible in her limbs taken separately.'

Abhinavagupta inherited Ānandavardhana's theory of *dhvani* along with its criticism by Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka who put more emphasis on the evocation of *rasa*.

Abhinavagupta accepted Ānandavardhana's categorisation of *dhvani* and added certain categories himself. He reinterpreted the theory by referring to the fundamental question: What is *dhvani*? '*Dhvanat iti dhvani*', that which sounds or resonates or implies is *dhvani*. '*Dhvanyate iti dhvani*' – *dhvani* is that which is reverberated or implied. Abhinavagupta accepts the three-fold classification of *dhvani*, but he brings in his own criteria *laukika* and *alaukika* for it. *Laukika* is that which one encounters in everyday life; the other is *alaukika*, *kāvya vyāpāra gocara*, and is to be found only in poetry. The *laukika dhvani* in poetry is also two-fold: *vastu dhvani* and *alaṁkāra dhvani*. In these two cases, the *laukika dhvani* is manifest. But *rasa-dhvani* can be found only in poetry. Abhinavagupta holds that *rasa dhvani* alone constitutes the soul of poetry. Both vastu *dhvani* and *alaṁkāra dhvani* are the means but *rasa-dhvani* is the *summum bonum* of poetic experience.

Language that expresses meaning explicitly lacking emotion or suggestion cannot constitute poetry. One may cite an example: In the sentence, 'The beloved concealed the clothes and she was searching for her dress frantically,' there is no suggestion in it. But it suggests the implicit if the same sentence is stated in the words, 'The thief of heart stole her clothes'. This also evokes the erotic sentiment in the listener's mind as it touches the implicative or the suggestive level, known as *vyañjanā*. The *dhvani* principle is applicable to poetry where the suggested sense is a *rasa*, *alaṁkāra* (metaphor) or *vastu* (object). (*Dhvanyāloka*, I.13.) For Abhinavagupta, it is only when *dhvani* suggests a *rasa*, that a poem can be said to be first-rate poetry. This is *rasa-dhvani*. Abhinavagupta proclaimed that *rasa* is the soul of *dhvani*.

The *Rasa* Theory

The term *rasa* originally meant the essence, juice or sap of a plant. The term was known during Vedic times. In Indian culinary art, oil, spices and other ingredients in a food preparation produce a peculiar flavour or *rasa* in it. Suddenly, the colour of the whole preparation changes and the taste that emerges is quite different from that of its constituents. Similarly, chewing a betel leaf has been a part of Indian culture since ancient days. The chewing (*carvaṇa*) of the betel leaf along with lime, catechu, and areca nut produces *rasa*, something quite different in colour or taste from that of the constituents. But the concept of *rasa* gradually became subtler. In the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*, Kashyapa addresses Buddha in the following words:

'O Buddha, like the juice of sugarcane which yields various flavours when boiled various times, I listen to the Buddha speak.'

Bodhisattva is often compared with sugarcane:

'The great Bodhisattva is like sugarcane or sesame which, when pressed with a device, gives forth juice or oil.' (Kieschnick, p. 251)

By the 4-5th century, alchemy developed as a full-fledged science. The whole discourse on alchemy revolved around the term *rasa*. It was also known as *rasāyana* or the path of *rasa*. But, in contrast to the juicy nature of *rasa*, the alchemist termed the ash-essence (*bhasma*) of different metals and gems as *rasa*. The ash-essence of mercury was termed as the *rasādhirāja*. Metal-*rasa* was supposed to rejuvenate the heart, mind and body of the consumer. Can *rasa*, much subtler than even ash, also rejuvenate the soul? This was the occasion when Bharata Muni extended the term to drama and developed a full-fledged theory of *rasa*.

Rasa, says Bharata Muni, is that which can be relished – like the taste of food – *Rasyate anena iti rasaḥ* (*āsvādayatva*). Any performing art, be it dance or drama, is not complete without producing *rasa*, the same as it is in poetry or other literary forms. *Rasa* is the thing that mediates between the performing artists and the spectator.

Bharata expounded the *Rasa* Theory in the famous *sūtra* '*vibhāvanubhaāvavyabhicārīsaṁyogād rasaniṭpattiḥ*' of his *Nāṭyaśāstra* (2nd century BCE), which means that *rasa* is generated when *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* and *vyabhicārī* or transitory mental states unite in an aesthetic presentation. *Rasa* is said to arise when the *sthāyībhāva* or abiding mental state of the spectator or reader is awakened by the combination of the *vibhāvas*, *anubhāvas*, *vyabhicārībhāva* and *sāttvic bhāvas*. What are these different components that evoke *rasa* as a whole? R. Gnoli uses the term 'determiners' for *vibhāvas*. Gnoli explains the process how *vibhāvas* as external stimuli like the story,

stage and the actor, awaken our latent sentiments. *Anubhāvas* are the consequents – deliberate manifestations of feelings on the part of the actor in accordance with the mood. *Vyabhicārī bhāvas* are the transient feelings that arise along with the basic permanent sentiment. For example, if the basic sentiment is love (*rati*), joy in union will be the accompanying transient emotion.

The *Nāṭayaśāstra* classifies eight *sthāyī bhāvas* and their corresponding *rasas* as follows:

Bhāva	*Rasa*
Rati (Love)	*Sṛṅgāra Rasa*
Hāsya (Humour)	*Hāsya Rasa*
Śoka (Sorrow)	*Karuṇa Rasa*
Krodha (Anger)	*Raudra Rasa*
Utsāha (Energy)	*Vīra Rasa*
Bhaya (Fear)	*Bhayānaka Rasa*
Jugupsā (Disgust)	*Bībhatsa Rasa*
Vismaya (Wonder)	*Adbhut Rasa*

Rasa and *bhāva* can be considered as Siamese twins: one without the other would not have a sensitive life. *Rasa* cannot be generated without *bhāva* and vice-versa.

Bharata's theory of *Rasa* was analysed by Bhatta Lollata (9th century). Lollata examined it only in the context of performing arts like drama. According to him, '*Rasa* is a *sthāyībhāva* intensified by a poetic description or enactment of a play by the actors through *vibhāvas*, *anubhāvas* etc'. (Sankaran, p. 98) For Lollata, '*Rasa* primarily resides in the character and also in the actors on account of their imagining themselves for the moment to be those very same characters'. (Sankaran, pp. 98-99). In Lollatta's view, it is the actors who exhibit the *rasa* and so it is they who experience it. There is no consideration for either the poet or the audience. But, how does the audience relish the *rasa*?

Śri Śankuka criticised Lollaṭa for equating *rasa* with *sthāyībhāva*. Śankuka argued that when a spectator witnesses a perfect imitation/ reproduction of the characters and their experiences, the spectator forgets momentarily the difference between the actor and the character and inferentially experiences the emotion of the character. This experience of aesthetic emotion by a spectator is a reflex of real emotional moods, *sthāyībhāva* of the characters. Inferential experience is the realisation of *rasa*. Śankuka brings in the spectator in the experience of *rasa*. But, how can it be said that an actor, without knowing the original, imitate, or the spectator without knowing the original, infer the imitation? (Śankaran, p. 99).

Then comes Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka. He says that *rasa* is neither known through the means of knowledge, nor produced nor manifested. If it be a known thing, then in *karuṇa*, one must experience pain and not pleasure. If it is known through *śabda*, there cannot be any sense of joy. Witnessing actual love-play of two lovers on stage may cause aversion in elderly spectators. Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka explores 'that really constitutes realisation of *rasa*'. (Sankaran, p. 103) Sankaran states that for Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka the poetic language has three functions:

1. *Abhidhā* or denotative
2. *Bhāvanā* or unificatory
3. *Bhojakatva* or *bhoga* or enjoyment

All linguistic expressions have *abhidhā* or denotational function. Only poetry has *bhāvanā*. The *guṇas* and *alaṁkāras* generate *bhāvanā* in ordinary poetry. 'Difficulty in realisation of *Rasa* is the individualistic element of the spectator of *sahṛdayas* on one side and actors and characters on the other'. (Śankaran, p. 103) Bhatta Nāyaka assumed the 'unification of the character, *sahṛdaya* and the actor'. There is complete unification of the three elements and this is called *sādhāraṇīkaraṇa* or universalisation, a process which Abhinavagupta later made thorough use of in his own theory. When there is a powerful aesthetic presentation, an individual loses his individuality and, aided by imaginative sympathy, undergoes *sādhāraṇīkaraṇa*. When an emotion is universalised, the third aspect viz. *bhojakatva* comes into play. Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka says that the stage of *bhoga* arises only through predominance of *sattva guṇa* over the other two *guṇas*, *rajas* and *tamas*, and hence is always pleasant. This resolves the problem as to how the *karuṇa rasa* is also pleasant.

Abhinavagupta assimilates many of Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's ideas, but differs with him on the terminology he has used. For Abhinava, it is *dhvani* or suggestion that is the essence of poetry. Abhinavagupta brings *sādhāraṇīkaraṇa* or *bhāvakatva* of Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka under *vyañjanā* and *bhoga* under *rasapratīti*.

Abhinavagupta synthesises two different models - Ānandavardhana's theory of *Dhvani*, fully developed in the four *udyotas* (flash) of the *Dhvanyāloka* and Bhaṭṭa

Nāyaka's ideas on aesthetic experience as enunciated in *Hṛdayadarpaṇa*.

In *Abhinavabhāratī*, Abhinavagupta elaborates on the Theory of *Rasa* in the sixth chapter. The points he discusses are: 'Whose *rasa* is it that we are realising? Is it that of the poet or of the great characters or that of the actors or only our own? Moreover, what are the different emotions that produce *rasa*? It was most problematic for Abhinava to explain how painful emotions are appealing to us? Though we cry while watching tragic scenes and even shed tears, why do we feel inspired to return to read or watch the same tragic scene again and like to shed tears? Man wants to relish the pleasant but why is it that painful emotions expressed in literature charm us?' (Śankaran, p. 97)

Abhinavagupta's Aesthetics

Abhinavagupta's exposition of *dhvani* and *rasa* in his two works, *Dhvanyāloka Locana* and *Abhinavabhāratī*, is a remarkable feat of synthesising the different theories prevalent in poetics and dramaturgy. Abhinavagupta formulated the solution to the problems that Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka had posed by reposing his belief in the immortality of the soul. All souls have in them implanted certain *vāsanās* (instincts) which are known as *sthāyībhāvas*, more particularly among the *sahṛdaya* (sensitive critics or emotional community). 'When there is vivid representation of the *vibhāvas* (determinants), *anubhāvas* (consequents) and *vyabhicārībhāvas* (transitory mental states), this instinct is called forth and developed to that climax when it is realised by us, accompanied by thrill or joy'. (Sankaran, p. 104) This is the realisation of *rasa*. *Rasa* is the emotional mood revealed in blissful knowledge, free from barriers that hinder its realisation. What are the seven obstacles? Gnoli discusses these in his *The Aesthetic Experience according to Abhinavagupta* (1968):

1. **Unsuitability.** The lack of adequate realisation of the probability of things. If one is not convinced of the things presented, one cannot be absorbed in full attention to realise *rasa*. For an extraordinary incident, extraordinary characters are needed. To depict the scene of Hanūmāna crossing the sea, Hanūmāna has to be presented as the extremely powerful son of the God of Wind.
2. **Immersion in temporal and spatial determination**, perceived as exclusively one's own or exclusively that of someone else. When the critic or *sahṛdaya* detaches himself from the object described, and realises happiness or sorrow as existing within himself, there may arise in him the desire to preserve it or conceal it and so on. This hinders the realisation of *rasa*.
3. **Absorption in our own personal pleasure or pain** - If one is overpowered by one's own happiness or sorrow, one cannot concentrate his attention on something else.
4. **Defective means of perception**
5. **Lack of evidence**
6. **Lack of some predominant factor.** Our mind does not rest contended with the knowledge of things subordinate, for it seeks the predominant ones. *Vibhāvas*, *anubhāvas*, *vyabhicārībhāvas* are subordinate and go to develop *sthāyībhāvas* which are dominant. *Sthāyībhāvas* are regarded as dominant emotional states of being as, these are directly associated with the dominant aim of life, or *purushārtha*. *Rati* is associated with *kāma*, *dharma* with *artha*, *śama* (quietism) with *mokṣa*. *Vyabhicārībhāvas* are not of permanent nature and are brought about by certain causes. When these causes are removed, the *vyabhicārī bhāva* disappears. For example, if one says, 'This person is lazy,' one naturally is inclined to ask, 'Why is he so lazy?' That means laziness is not a permanent state but brought about by some temporary cause. But, if we take a statement like, 'Rama possesses great energy and power,' no one is inclined to ask the question about his *utsāha*; for *utsāha* is permanent.
7. **The presence of doubt.** *Vibhāvas*, *anubhāvas* and *vyabhicārībhāvas* are not severally related to any specific *sthāyībhāva*. Shedding tears is an *anubhāva* which may result from joy or pain or sorrow or some disease in the eye. When the *vibhāva* is death of a relative, shedding tears is the *anubhāva* and contemplation, weakness etc. the *vyabhicārī bhāvas*. There may arise a doubt regarding a particular *sthāyibhāva* that is developed. When there is such specific combination, we know this *sthāyibhāva* developed is *śoka* and the *rasa* is *karuṇa*.

These seven barriers are overcome when the *sahṛdaya* through imaginative sympathy identifies himself with the situation, and he realises his own emotion that has been stirred and developed to a climax, free from all limitations and accompanied by thrill. (Sankaran, p. 109) This realisation is in the nature of pure joy and is *alaukika*, transcendental. It lasts only during the time of realisation and never beyond it and is different from the *sthayībhāva* as it is not a permanent state. This is the *rasa*.

Abhinavagupta makes a distinction between the world of drama/ representation and real life. In art, one moves

from the gross to more subtle forms of expressions and experiences. There is a propensity to realise unity amidst multiplicity or what some Buddhist masters speculated: 'to see a world in a grain of sand'. Abhinavagupta also grappled with the old problem as to how the feeling that might cause pain in real life is capable of providing pleasure in an art form. Here, he again borrowed Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's idea that *rasa* is *sāttvik* and hence always relishable.

Abhinavagupta now had to incorporate ideas from the *Sāṁkhya* philosophy to explain the dichotomy of 'enjoyable' pathos. The emotional mood pertaining to *karuṇa* is śoka or grief. During the realisation of *karuṇa*, the mind gets so absorbed in the representation (*tanmayatā*) that it achieves a certain equipoise (*śama*). When the mind attains balance, free from any disturbance, delight is produced; that is what *Sāṁkhya* thinkers had propounded. This explains how tragic scenes are pleasurable, though human nature abhors the experience of pain. This also puts a question mark on Buddhist worldview that there is *duḥkha* in the world. A connoisseur can generate bliss in this very life if he becomes a spectator of the cosmic drama and evokes the *karuṇa rasa* by transcending his limitations and individuality.

According to Abhinavagupta's aesthetical thinking, great literary works suffused with elements of *Rasa-dhvani* finally lead to the experience of *śānta rasa*. *Kāvya* or poetry can thus become an alternative path to *mokṣa*. This theory had a tremendous impact on India's literary traditions as the Bhakti upsurge in Indian poetry throughout the length and breadth of the country shows.

Abhinavagupta deals with each *rasa* corresponding to eight *sthāyībhāvas* in the sixth chapter of *Abhinavabhāratī*. All these are related to the three *puruṣārthas* or ends of life – *dharma*, *artha*, and *kāma*. This was his another great feat of creative fusion. Abhinavagupta now wanted to fit in the highest *puruṣārtha*, that is, *mokṣa*, in his aesthetic doctrine. This he achieved by bringing up another *rasa*, *śānta rasa*, whose abiding emotional mood is *śama* (quietude), related to *mokṣa*. *Śama* became the *sthāyībhāva* for *śānta rasa*.

The greatest achievement of Abhinavagupta in the field of aesthetic philosophy is his incorporating *śānta rasa* in the theory of *Rasa*. Udbhata and Ānandavardhana both had accepted *śānta* as the ninth *rasa*. But, it was Abhinavagupta who incorporated this *rasa* in the emerging paradigm. He perceived *śanta* as the ultimate in the process of *rasa* realisation.

Abhinavagupta also explained how *śānta rasa* underlies all the other eight *rasas*. *Śānta rasa* pervades all the *rasas* like the sixteenth digit of immortality of the moon. Thus *śānta rasa* is the ultimate *rasa*. All the other *rasas* emanate from *śānta rasa* and merge again into it. Bharata Muni says:

> 'All emotions, when their respective conditions or excitants obtain, proceed from *śānta*; and when the conditions are withdrawn they again merge or repose in *śānta*.'
>
> (Sankaran, p. 116)

Since all *rasas* when realised are *alaukika* and free from sensual enjoyment, they are necessarily of the nature of *śānta rasa*.

Abhinavagupta's theory can be summed up in these words: *Rasa Dhvani* forms the soul of poetry and *śānta rasa* is the predominant *rasa* with even painful emotions becoming pleasant when it is experienced. He replaces Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's term *bhāvakatva* by *vyañjanā* (*dhvani*) or suggestion in his analysis of the process of *rasa* realisation.

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Camatkāra – an *Alaukika* Experience

The realisation of *rasa* is an *alaukika* or trans-mundane experience. It is different from an ordinary experience. In an ordinary experience, even after the cause is eliminated, the effect continues to exist, just as a pot continues to exist even if the potters-wheel, which produces the pot, is destroyed. But, in case of *rasa*,

realisation ends when the *vibhāvas* etc. are withdrawn. There are other ordinary experiences in which causes reveal things that already exist. For instance, a lamp is the *vibhāva* for revealing a pot that is kept in a dark room. But, in case of *rasa*, it is not correct to assume that *rasa* pre-exists *vibhāvas*. Thus, *rasa* is not an ordinary experience. *Rasapratīti* is *alaukika*. *Rasa* is neither *jñāpaka* nor *kāraka*, it is *carvaṇopayogī* – that which can be savoured only. (*Locana* I.18) *Rasa* is something which is produced *sui generis* like the experience of rumination (*carvaṇa*).

Rasa is evoked when the senses are fully absorbed (*tanmaya*) in something to the exclusion of everything else. The objects which arouse this state may be food or wine (*madya*), a song or a dance. In fact, free of all limitations, aesthetic experience is like a mystic experience, a state of pure bliss. It is *pūrṇananda* or supreme bliss. The relish of *rasa* resulting from a sudden perception of beauty gives rise to a sense of wonder, *camatkāra*, a key term in Abhinava's aesthetics. *Camatkāra* is more than amazement. It emerges like a flash of lightning and fills one with thrill. It is *apūrva* and *alaukika*. Abhinavagupta uses the term for the first time in *Locana* I.12 where he says that *vismaya* is not *camatkāra*. *Vismaya* is wonder. Sometimes *alaukika* words and their meanings generate curiosity (*kautūhala*) in us, he says, but these are not so intense as to immerse us in *rasa*. Giving the example of *chitrakāvya*, he points out that the structure, words and the meaning in *chitrakāvya* may cause a sense of curiosity and wonder in us, but it is not the principal form of *kāvya*. True poetry has such a powerful flow that the *sahṛdaya* or sensitive reader or listener is immersed in *rasa* and loses his individuality. Such is the *camātkara* of *rasa*. V. Raghvan mentions that the word *camatkāra* was originally an onomatopoeic word referring to the clicking sound we make with our tongue when we taste something snappy, and in the course of its semantic enlargement, *camatkāra* came to mean a sudden fillip relating to any feeling of a pleasurable type. (Raghvan: p. 269) *Camatkāra* involves a burst of sudden luminosity, like a lightning flash palpitating with enormous de-individuated joy. It is of the nature of *Ādi Śiva*, who has two aspects – *prakāśa* (light) and *vimarśa* (reflective awareness), also known as *ānandaśakti*, the mother of bliss. The highest spiritual realisation mentioned by Shankaracharya in *Saundarya Laharī* is that of Śakti in lightning-like *kalā* as *sadākhya kalā* (joyous lightning flash). (*Saundarya Laharī*, v. 21) Similarly, the *kuṇḍalinī śakti* too is described as resting in the rectum within the body and is said to rise like lightning and shower the aspirant with inexpressible, *alaukika*, bliss. *Camatkāra* as a concept is a paradigmatic invention to describe the ultimate experiential encounter of a person.

> ***Rasa*** **is evoked when the senses are fully absorbed (*tanmaya*) in something to the exclusion of everything else. The objects which arouse this state may be food or wine (*madya*), a song or a dance. In fact, free of all limitations, aesthetic experience is like a mystic experience, a state of pure bliss.**

Utpaldeva, Abhinavagupta's guru, was the first to use the term in a technical sense. Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka also used it in his *Hṛdayadarpaṇa*. *Camatkāra* is synonymous with the Buddhist *samvega* and *vismaya* of the Spanda School. Here, the term is used in the sense that the ordinary, *laukika* world is suddenly replaced by a new, *apūrva*, incidence. Abhinavagupta states that *camatkāra* is present in every form of life. It is what distinguishes conscious beings from inanimate matter. Aesthetic sensibility is nothing but the capacity to wonder, more condensed than ordinary wonder.

For Abhinavagupta *camatkāra* provided a convenient solution for the un-pleasurable *rasa* problem, since the spectator was now expected to feel a detached cognitive delight, regardless of the emotional value of the text. *Rasa* for Abhinavagupta involved a de-individuated affective state occurring in the spectator's mind and extracted from a remembered personal experience of emotion. The immersion in delight (*bhogāveśa*) is *camatkāra*. It is a state of *rasāveśa* or the rush of *rasa*. The *rasa* gushes forth and pours into the being just as a spark bursts into fire in dry wood. Even if a play is based upon the *bībhatsa* or *karuṇa rasas*, the resulting feeling in the reader or the spectator is *camatkāra*, which fills the individual with delight. This is the reason why TV serials like 'Fear Files' having fear as the predominant theme continue to fascinate viewers. In real life, no one wishes to ever encounter such situations, but as a spectator of a play one derives maximum pleasure out of them.

The aesthetic experience is a direct experience, *sui generis*, free of every impediment. This kind of consciousness

without obstacles has been termed as *camatkāra*. Abhinavagupta has discussed the physical effects of *camatkāra* like trembling, horripilation, *ullasana* - joyful motion of limbs. Moreover, the aesthetic experience of *camatkāra* appears each time poetic expressions arouse it. *Camatkāra* is free from any impediments. It is an absolutely independent state of joy. In *Tantrāloka*, Abhinavagupta always invokes the imagery of *camatkāra* to describe the esoteric energy lying dormant within our body. The divine resides within the human body (*deva-sadana-deha*) and the lowest *cakra*, *mūlādhāra* is soaked in *camatkāra rasa* that is really the nectar of joy. (*Tantrāloka*: Chapter 29.176; Chapter 26.63)

Brahmānubhūti vs *Rasānubhūti*

Realisation of *rasa* and the realisation of the supreme Brahman is said to be a similar experience, but still there are certain differences.

Aesthetic delight being temporary disappears as soon as the factors causing it are not there, while *brahmānubhūti* is permanent. In *rasānubhūti*, there is no knowledge of the ultimate reality and the reality of normal everyday life returns after the experience is over. Abhinava says that the two experiences are family-resemblances.

Whereas *brahmānubhūti* means oneness with the Absolute without any differentiation, the delight produced by *rasa* is experienced through the process of combination of different elements like the determinants and the consequents. Aesthetic delight being temporary disappears as soon as the factors causing it are not there, while *brahmānubhūti* is permanent. In *rasānubhūti*, there is no knowledge of the ultimate reality and the reality of normal everyday life returns after the experience is over. Abhinava says that the two experiences are family-resemblances. Gnoli sums up Abhinavagupta's view thus: 'The aesthetical and mystical bliss is nothing but a state of independence, of liberty from any extraneous solicitation and hence of rest 'lysis', tasting, gestation and bliss are strictly connected.' (R.Gnoli: XLI)

Abhinavagupta further describes *rasa* 'to be a clarification of a spectator's own latent emotional propensities, resulting in a momentary manifestation of an inner *brahmāsvāda* - the tasting of ultimate bliss' (Gerow; pp. 267–68) He further suggests that 'the enjoyment of *rasa* is only a grain of that bliss' (*tadānandaviprun̥ mātrāvabhāso* hi *rasāsvādaḥ*) (*Locana*, Udyot 3.43).

In *Dhvanyāloka Locana*, Abhinavagupta likens *rasa* to milk which the poet, as the *dhenu* or cow of '*vāc*' or speech yields to satiate the thirst of the *sahṛdaya*-calves. It is quite different from the yogi's experience. There is no *rasāveśa* in a yogi. The yogi has to make an effort to get this milk. Abhinavagupta has borrowed the metaphor from *Kalidas's* description of the Himalayas in *Kumārsambhava* in which the earth shown as a wish-fulfilling cow (*kāmadhenu*), yielding gems and medicinal herbs, and the Himalayas as her favorite calf. Abhinavagupta uses it to compare the relishing of *rasa* by a *kāvya-rasika sahṛdaya* and a yogi. (*Dhvanyāloka Locana* 1.6) Like Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka, Abhinavagupta gives to the poet a status higher than that of the yogi.

Critic = Poet/ Reader = Writer

In *S/Z (1970)*, Roland Barthes, leading figure of French post-structuralism raised the issue of the 'writerly' (scriptable) text in which the reader is involved equally as a kind of 'writer' to produce meaning and convert text into a polysemic object. The 'text' in Western literature was treated as passive for the reader with mere authority of the author ('readerly' text). Barthes writes, 'The goal of literary work (of literature as work) [which] is to make the reader no longer a consumer, but a producer of the text. Our literature is characterized by the pitiless divorce, which the literary institution maintains between the producer of the text and its user, between its owner and its consumer, between its author and its reader. This reader is thereby plunged into a kind of idleness – he is intransitive; he is, in short, serious: instead of functioning himself, instead of gaining access to the magic of the signifier, to the pleasure of writing, he is left with no more than the poor freedom either to accept or reject the text: reading is nothing more than a referendum. Opposite the writerly text, then, is its counter-value, its negative, reactive value: what can be read, but not written: the readerly. We call any readerly text a classic text.' (Barthes: 1974, p. 4)

The deconstructionists and post-structural theorists deployed writerly text as a means to transform literature into an emancipatory agenda:

> 'We know that to restore to writing its future, we must reverse its myth: the birth of the reader must be ransomed by the death of the Author.' (Barthes, 1966)

Barthes further sought to take literature beyond meaning, a non-semantic appreciation of literature. He stated:
'Thus literature (it would be better, henceforth, to say writing), by refusing to assign to the text (and to the world as text) a 'secret': that is, an ultimate meaning, liberates an activity which we might call counter-theological, properly revolutionary, for to refuse to arrest meaning is finally to refuse God and his hypostases, reason, science, the law.' (*ibid*)

But, Indian genius developed the theory of the writerly text whereby the reader gains equal prominence as the composer and the reader is no longer lost in the endless chain of evaporating meaning or any ultimate meaning, but realises the delight of reading and listening, centered within himself. The author was decentralised in the *Rasa Dhvani* School and the spectator/reader gained centrality in the realisation of aesthetic experience, but the author was never non-existent. Indian masters believed in life-affirming predicament and the harmonious existence of different elements. The author and the critic, the performer and the spectator became co-partners as *sahṛdaya*. The text is to be savoured only by the person with a heart. The reading/ watching was no longer a dull, passive exercise. It became a journey to realise the goals of *puruṣārtha* and ultimately the freedom from the ordinary, mundane existence.

The very first verse of the *Locana* pitches for the parity between the poet and the critic. Abhinavagupta says:
May the element of *Saraswatī/ Vāc*, which, without any cause, creates *apūrva* (not known before) subjects and expands the composition, which infuses *rasa* into the inanimate stones and vivifies the whole universe, which with the power of *prajñyā* (intuition) and *upākhya* (expression) turns the world into a delightful place, and which gushes forth in the hearts of the poets and the *sahṛdaya*-critics, be ever victorious! Abhinavagupta claims that the same element is present in the poet as well as the critic. Referring to Bhatta Tauta, his preceptor, he describes how a spectator, a poet and an actor realise the same *rasa*. (*Dhvanyāloka Locana* 1.6)

Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka* and Abhinavagupta's commentary on it affirmed the writerly nature of *rasa* a millennium before the French post-structuralists forayed into the world of experiential literature. While, for Lollaṭa (early ninth century), this aesthetic flavor (*rasa*) was an augmented or enhanced stable emotion (*sthāyībhāva*) of a character and shared by the actor playing the part; for Śaṅkuka (late ninth century), *rasa* is located in the character, but only imitated by the actor. But for *dhvani* theorists like Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta, *rasa* resides in the *sahṛdaya*, the critic or the sharing affective community. This is a liberating moment for one savouring the aesthetic experience.

But for *dhvani* theorists like Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta, *rasa* resides in the *sahṛdaya*, the critic or the sharing affective community. This is a liberating moment for one savouring the aesthetic experience.

Abhinavagupta further describes *rasa* to be a catharsis of the spectator's own latent emotional propensities, resulting in a momentary manifestation of an inner *brahmāsvāda* – the tasting of ultimate bliss. (Edwin Gerow: 267–68)

French post-structuralists seek a writerly text in which bliss (*jouissance*) is produced and which transcends the pleasure of the text (*plaisir*) merely by verbal signification. In his essay titled, *The Death of the Author*, Barthes writes:

> 'We know that a text does not consist of a line of words, releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of the Author-God), but is a space of many dimensions in which are wedded and contested various kinds of writing, not one of which is original: the text is a tissue of citations, resulting from the thousand sources of culture.' (Barthes, 1966)

Nothing original can come from an author out of pathos or a feeling of impersonal delight. Barthes further adds, 'The writer can only imitate a gesture forever anterior, never original; his only power is to combine the different kinds of writing, to oppose some by others, so as never to sustain himself by just one of them; if he wants to express himself, at least he should know that the internal

'thing' he claims to 'translate' is itself only a readymade dictionary whose words can be explained (defined) only by other words, and so on ad *infinitum*.' (Barthes)

Barthes was exploring how literary expressiveness flows in the state of *rasāveśa* and pours from the being immersed in emotion (*niveśa*). He was not *apūrva* or unique in this quest, since Indian poetic theorists had long moved beyond the idea of the pleasure of the text to the ultimate experience of *camatkāra* in literature. Abhinavagupta's concept of *pratibhā* or intuition as the motivating force of creativity with emphasis on its resonance in the heart of the *sahṛdaya*, where *rasa* is manifested through *hṛdaya sparśa* (touching of heart), gives prominence to direct experience. Abhinavagupta says that a great work of literature is the expression of a soul struck by *camatkāra* and that no amount of mere weaving of the text can produce true literature. Here Barthes seems to almost echo Abhinavagupta's views.

The *Sahṛdaya*

As said already Abhinavagupta seems to be deeply influenced by Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's *Sahṛdayadarpaṇa*. Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka had criticised Ānandvardhana's concept of *dhvani* and developed his own parameters for savouring of *rasa* by an 'emotional community'. He discusses Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's work in detail in his *Locana* commentary on *Dhvanyāloka*. In fact, the two concepts that are central to Abhinavagupta's philosophy and aesthetics both can be traced to the influence of Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's work. According to Abhinavagupta, *hṛdaya* or heart being the main instrument of perception, the *rasa* experienced by it is *alaukika* or of non-mundane nature or essentially spiritual. Similarly, his whole philosophy of *pratyabhijñāna* is based upon the mirror analogy. It is the *abhāsavāda* or the theory of appearances related to the notion of *bimba-pratibimba*. What we perceive is the reflection of our own consciousness. The entire world is of the nature of a reflection in the mirror of cosmic consciousness – *bimba-pratibimba*. But, is *pratibimba* possible in the absence of a real thing? Abhinavagupta says that existence of *bimba* is not necessary for *pratibimba*. In dream experiences, one perceives objects reflected in the mind without any real object outside. By analogy, Abhinavagupta argues that the world is reflected in consciousness without there being a real world outside. The world is a reflection of the absolute consciousness, Śiva-consciousness. Nature of existence is light or *prakāśa*. This is identified with *samvit*. *Samvit* is that which illumines the object (*artha prakāśa rūpa*). It is light itself. It is *svatantra*, free, not limited by space or time. The *samvit* has *ānandaśakti*. *Ānandaśakti* has three aspects - *icchāśakti*, *jñānaśakti* and *kriyāśakti*. *Samvit* is the ultimate reality. In its absolute independent state of joy, it is *ānanda* as desire called *camatkāra*. Thus, this aesthetic experience leads one to the experience of the Absolute though momentarily, since *camatkāra* is the nature of *samvit* or consciousness. Everything is a reflection of Parama Śiva and hence has the nature of Śiva. When the individual human soul recognises its true nature (*pratyabhijñā*) as Śiva, the soul reaches the ultimate goal.

We have seen how in *Locana*, Abhinavagupta observes that not everyone has the intrinsic capacity to taste a poem. It is only the *sahṛdaya* who has this aesthetic capability. An opaque heart does not wonder. Again the mirror analogy explains the whole process. Just like a mirror reflects better when cleaned, analogously the reflection in consciousness gets progressively purified of memory and other *vāsanās* until it perfectly reflects the Śiva-consciousness, which alone is the essential nature and perfect knowledge. The mirror of the heart of a *rasika* can be cleansed only by regular immersion (*nimmajana*) in aesthetic delight.

> **A spectacle seen by many people together at the same time generates a greater pleasure than if it is seen by a single individual. It is considered that, when a group of people gather together in order to witness the performance of a dance or of song, or to perform spiritual practices, if they are concentrated and immersed in the show all together, they experience true enjoyment than that of each individual.**

The *sahṛdaya* has a clear mirror of mind by means of repeated acquaintances with and practice of poetry. In *Abhinavabhāratī*, Abhinavagupta states that the mind and heart must be like a mirror, ready to receive all the images reflected in them. (Gnoli, fn p. XLIV) He further states that the poetic sensibility of a *sahṛdaya* is the faculty of identifying (*tādātmya*) with the heart of a poet (*kavihṛdaya-tādātmya-pratiyogyatā*).

Abhinavagupta observes that the pleasure of watching a spectacle increases when the number of spectators is large. A spectacle seen by many people together at the same time generates a greater pleasure than if it is seen by a single individual. It is considered that, when a group

of people gather together in order to witness the performance of a dance or of song, or to perform spiritual practices, if they are concentrated and immersed in the show all together, they experience true enjoyment than that of each individual when alone. Individually, consciousness is contracted, but collectively, while watching a spectacle it expands since everyone's consciousness is reflected in the consciousness of the other. The joy of one spectator's consciousness is reflected in the consciousness of the other spectators, as if in so many mirrors, and expanding in this manner, the state of contraction of individual consciousness comes to an end. And when many people together watch a spectacle, joy multiplies as everyone, and not just one of them, identifies himself with it. When consciousness is in such a state of expansion, free of all obstacles (*vighna*), it is immersed in bliss. But, if even one of the spectators does not concentrate on the spectacle he is watching, and so does not share the experience of the others, this consciousness is disturbed as if rubbed by a rough surface. (Gnoli: pp. 38 - 39.)

Abhinavagupta extends this to the realm of spiritual practice. If a harmonious spiritual community is created, it can accelerate the spiritual evolution of its members compared with individual practice through this mirroring of consciousness. Group practices involving music, dance, meditation and rituals, including tantric sexual rites all combine to create a spectacle, *melaka* of the *Kula*. The ultimate purpose of group practices is the expansion of consciousness. And during the *cakra* ritual, no individual must be allowed to enter who is not concentrated and absorbed and thus does not share the state of consciousness of others; this would cause a contraction of consciousness. (*Tantrāloka*, Chapter 28: 373-378)

Universal consciousness which contracts due to differences of bodies, when it unites in the *cakra* ritual through mutual *samghatta* (union) and reflection of each other in the same act, achieves fullness after doubt and shyness are removed. Moreover, in a *cakra yāga*, the individual consciousness gets reflected in the *samvit* like multiple images (*pratibimba*) and attains universality without effort.

Abhinavagupta elaborates the point in the context of public performances like dance, music and drama. When everyone gets absorbed (*sarva tanmayībhava*), the delight produced is not of an individual, but of the totality, the *samvit*. (*Tantrāloka*, 28.375) The spectator who is (completely absorbed) (*tanmayībhavan*) and filled with joy (*āhlādita*) is no longer an individual; he experiences universal joy of *samvit*, the *pūrṇānada*.

In public performances like dance, the ever-delightful *samvit* attains unity and experiences the state of *pūrṇānanda*, total blissfulness. When there is absence of the factors of contraction like jealousy, hate, etc., consciousness expands in the fullness of perfect bliss. But even if there is one odd person who is not concentrated or absorbed (*tādātmya*), this may cause hindrance in such expansion of consciousness, as if touched by some rough and uneven surface. Abhinavagupta says in *Tantrāloka* that admitting such a person in *chakra* rites whose consciousness is in a state of dispersal will cause contraction.

In public performances like dance, the ever-delightful *samvit* attains unity and experiences the state of *pūrṇānanda*, total blissfulness. When there is absence of the factors of contraction like jealousy, hate, etc., consciousness expands in the fullness of perfect bliss.

Similarly, poetry can be truly relished only by a *sahṛdaya*. If one is not sensitively equipped and is not fully absorbed in poetry, one cannot experience the delectable *rasa* or aesthetic emotion that it generates or feel astonished (*camatkṛt*) by the resonance (*dhvani*) of its suggestive elements. And though *sādhāranīkaraṇa* is the aim, not everyone can be a *sahṛdaya*.

The heart (*hṛdaya*) is an important symbol in Abhinavagupta's tantric treatises, which refer to the seat of knowledge in the *Yoginīhṛdaya* (Heart of Yoginī). We also find how *hṛdaya* again holds the most important place in the *Parātriśikā Vivaraṇa*. Abhinavagupta terms '*sauh*' as the *hṛdayabīja* and sums up the Trika philosophy in this *hṛdayabīja*. He applies his philosophical concepts to the field of aesthetics and talks of how the *sahṛdaya* fully absorbed in relishing the *rasa* or essence of poetry loses his individuality and lets his *samvit* expand in an experience of *camatkāra*, a flash of astonishment and wonder at achieving consciousness of the self free of all limitations.

Primacy of aesthetics over mystic experience

Edwin Gerow raises a pertinent question. Gerow writes, 'We may better appreciate Abhinava's problem by asking how a sovereign aesthetics might help a Śaiva mystic develop a philosophically accountable notion of the Lord, who is, after all, at play.' (Edwin Gerow, 1994, p. 186) I would like to extend the question. How does one make aesthetic delight permanent like the spiritual experience? And, how does one make a mystic experience effortless? Can spiritual delight be generalised like aesthetic delight? How does one make spiritual realisation in this very body regarded as a temple (*deva-sadana-deha*) without abdicating worldly life? Spiritual realisation should not be beyond life and death, but life affirming. The Kula tradition, or at least Abhinava's rendering of that tradition, is expounded in *Tantrāloka*, Chapter 29. Abhinava's attitude towards the ritual use of the three M's (*makār*-s) is flexible so far as a practitioner's involvement is concerned and the wall between inner and outer bliss can be broken. By authentic initiation and above all by the grace of Śiva (*Śāṁbhavopāya*), one can attain the Bhairava status, where the outer and the inner self are the same. An initiated adept does not oppose the external world vis-à-vis the internal world, a subject vis-a-vis an object, the self vis-a-vis the other. Everything is equally the expression of Śakti, the supreme word, *parāvāk*. Abhinavagupta breaks down every wall between the sacred and the profane, ritual and ordinary life, so that the spiritual practitioner gets liberated while alive. Everything reflects everything else.

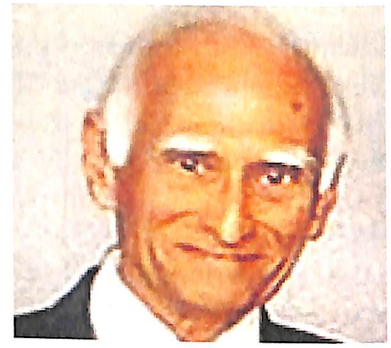
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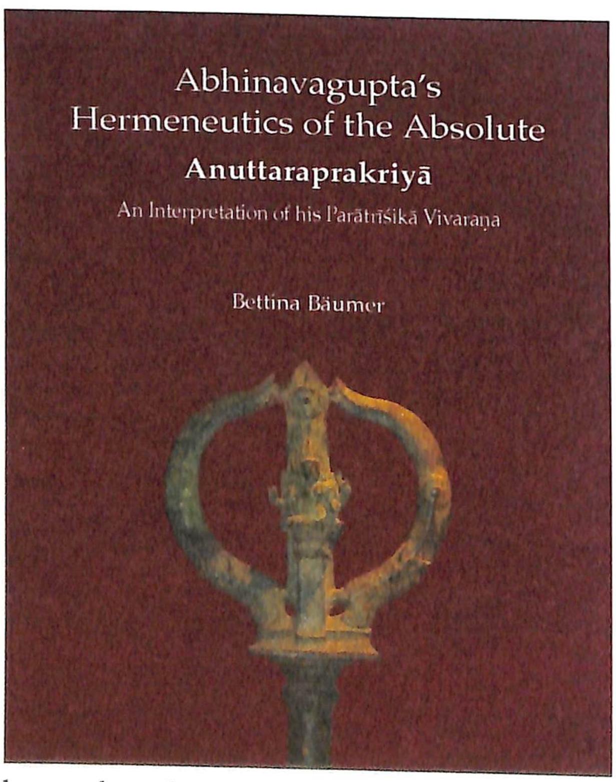
Book Review



Making a Text and a Tradition Accessible

A.N.D. Haksar

Abhinavagupta is an important name in Sanskrit literature and Indian philosophy. Most of the serious writings on these subjects mention at least three of his works. One is encyclopedic treatise on Kashmir Shaivism, the *Tantraloka* or Light on Tantra. The other two are path breaking commentaries on fine arts: the Abhinavabharati on Bharata's *Natya Shastra* and the *Dhvanyaloka Lochana* on poetics. But such texts are little perused today by those other than specialists, and their author remains virtually unknown to the growing public readership interested in ancient Indian culture



The book under review is intended to improve this perspective. 'Abhinavagupta,' says its writer, 'is one of the most extraordinary figures in the domain of Indian philosophy, aesthetics and mysticism'. 'It is high time,' she continues, 'That his genius got duly recognised beyond the area of his origin and language. For this we need translations of his works and studies which make him accessible outside'.

While Abhinavagupta's aesthetic theory, based on the *Natya Shastra*, has become an indispensable method to apply, not only in drama and music, there are a few authors, even in the Indian tradition, who combine such an enormous range of subjects and fields with the depth of mystical experience and philosophical insight. These words of the learned writer, a distinguished Austrian Indologist and professor of Religious Studies, are indicative of her effort to place her subject in a wider context. In the foreword to her book, another eminent scholar of India from France wryly observes that 'Indian philosophers seem to be... fascinated by Sankara's Advaita as if it were the acme of Indian thought...which... it is not'. This line of thinking is however not pursued in the present book which is an interpretative study of 'One of the most mature and difficult' Sanskrit works byAbhinavagupta. *Paratrishika Vivarana* is Abhinavagupta's commentary on the tantric text *Paratrishika*, one of the Trika systems, now generally known as Kashmir Shaivism. The original *Paratrishika*, dealing mainly with metaphysical-linguistic conceptions, is a short text of just thirty-seven stanzas, reproduced in the Devanagari script as an appendix of this book. The *ParatrishikaVivarana* is a longer text in prose with a substantial prologue and epilogue composed in verse. It has been partly translated but mainly explained by the present writer, but not in length. Some of the opening and concluding verses have however been transcribed in the Roman script which is welcome. Some other verses within the prose text, it is mentioned, are in a so far untranslatable Prakrit dialect, and have been excluded from this study.

Following Abhinavagupta's own usage in his *Tantraloka*, the present writer has preferred to describe *ParatrisikaVivarana* with the title *Anuttaraprakriya*. This has been rendered into English as 'Hermeneutics of the Absolute'. Hermeneutics, she explains, is 'the study of the methodological principles which rule over the

interpretation and explanation of revelatory texts'. Her own effort is similar to that. The aim of the present hermeneutical exercise, she writes, is 'to make a text and tradition accessible beyond the historical and linguistic context... discovering its relevance to our present world of the 21st century with its unprecedented contradictions between (material, technological) progress and (human, ethical, spiritual) regress'. This she has attempted through an interpretation and explanation of the *Paratrishika Vivarana* in ten chapters, apart from a detailed introduction and a brief conclusion.

'Translating and interpreting a text over a thousand years of history into a completely different historical, cultural, social, psychological, religious and spiritual context,' she writes, 'is a task which requires a conscious effort, ideally taking into account all those factors which have shaped the original text in the first instance, and which shape our understanding of it today'. This is indeed a formidable enterprise needing immense specialised, multi-disciplinary knowledge, insight and intellectual stamina in a scholar embarking upon it.

The choice before her, she further says, 'was to write a scholarly commentary which would be meaningful and accessible only to specialists, or to try to open up the text for the understanding of readers interested in the philosophy and spirituality of the tradition of non-dualist Kashmir Shaivism... I have chosen the second option which tries to give a key to this difficult text'.

The extent of her success is naturally for the perceptive reader to see. The text may admittedly be difficult, but her interpretation also is not too easy in the sense that it calls for continuous effort to follow it fully. Prepared for this application of the mind, those interested will find this study adding to their knowledge and appreciation of a subject which certainly deserves to be better known and understood.

For the more general reader, a further focus on Abhinavagupta the person may have added to the interest sought to be attracted towards his work. Some vivid details are available in the *Paratrishika Vivarana's* epilogue and also mentioned and translated towards the end of the book. He was born and lived in Kashmir just over a thousand years ago. His ancestors had migrated there from the plains below, two centuries ago and integrated with the valley's already vibrant tradition of study and scholarship. Some details of his teachers and their predecessors are known, as are those of his disciples and their students. Taken together they comprise a remarkable line of learning, which also extended outside Kashmir: Abhinavagupta had a guru from Punjab and a devotee from Tamil Nadu. The great scholar's autobiographical verses manifest his affection and esteem for those who preceded and followed him on the road of knowledge. So do the writings of his students, some mentioned in the book. One excluded from it is the Kashmiri satirist Kshemendra, who has described the sage as 'The crest-jewel of teachers and an ocean of wisdom'. Another student, Madhuraja of Madurai, has a moving verse about him, translated here:

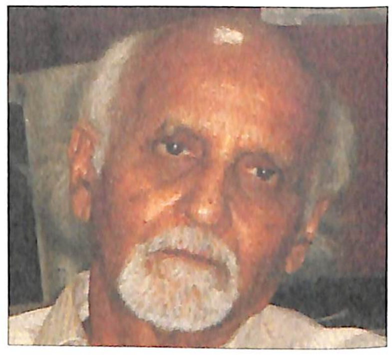
Whatever Abhinavagupta has written, it is written on the heart;

What other authors of texts have written; is (as if) written on water.

Abinavagupta was born and lived in Kashmir just over a thousand years ago. His ancestors had migrated there from the plains below, two centuries ago and integrated with the valley's already vibrant tradition of study and scholarship. Some details of his teachers and their predecessors are known, as are those of his disciples and their students.

A.N.D. Haksar is a noted scholar and translator of Sanskrit classics. He has had a distinguished career as an Indian diplomat, having served as Indian High Commissioner to Kenya and Seychelles and ambassador to Portugal and Yugoslavia. His translations from Sanskrit include *Simhasana Dvatrimshika, Hitopadesha, Tales of Ten Princes by Dandin, Three Satires from Ancient Kashmir: Kshemendra, Samaya Matrika and The Shattered Thigh and Other Plays: Bhasa.* He has also compiled a *Treasury of Sanskrit Poetry.*

परिचय



आचार्य अभिनवगुप्तः संक्षिप्त जीवन–वृत्त और कृतित्व

डॉ॰ शशि शेखर तोषखानी

कश्मीर शैव दर्शन के शीर्ष व्याख्याता और भरतीय सौंदर्य–शास्त्र और कला–चिंतन के सर्वाधिक प्रामाणिक आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त की भारत ही नहीं पूरे विश्व के दार्शनिक और बौद्धिक इतिहास में एक असाधारण व्यक्तित्व के रूप में प्रतिष्ठा है। काव्यालोचन और नाट्यशास्त्र, संगीत और भाषा–दर्शन के क्षेत्रों में भी उनका अवदान अपूर्व और अपार रहा है। अपनी चिंतन–दृष्टि के वैशिष्ट्य और आध्यात्मिक अनुभव की गहनता द्वारा अभिनवगुप्त ने ज्ञान और साधना की भारतीय परम्पराओं को नए आयाम दिए। अति प्राचीन काल से पूरे कश्मीर में व्याप्त तांत्रिक संस्कृति से विकसित शैवागमिक विचारधाराओं को उन्होंने अपनी अद्वयवादी दृष्टि के अनुरूप समन्वित करके एक सुव्यवस्थित और सुसंबद्ध दर्शन का रूप दिया जिसके लिए वसुगुप्त और सोमानंद, उत्पलदेव और भट्ट कल्लट ने पहले ही भूमि तैयार की थी। कौल और क्रम, स्पंद और प्रत्यमिज्ञा अद्वयवाद से संबद्ध सभी संप्रदाय अभिनवगुप्त द्वारा प्रवर्तित इस नई चिंतनधारा में समाहित हो गए। अनुत्तर त्रिक नाम से अभिहित इस धारा में अद्वैत का अर्थ था शिव और जीव, विषयी और विषय, ज्ञान और क्रिया, आत्म और अन्य का अभेद।

सौभाग्य से अभिनवगुप्त संस्कृत के अन्य प्राचीन ग्रंथकारों की भाँति अपने विषय में चुप नहीं हैं। उनके ग्रन्थों, विशेषकर *तंत्रालोक* और *परात्रिंशिका विवरण* से हमें उनके यशस्वी जीवन और ज्ञान–गरिमा की झलक देखने को मिलती है। हमें उनके पूर्वजों, माता–पिता, परिवार, गुरुओं, शिष्यों आदि के बारे में अनेक तथ्यों का पता चलता है। हम जान लेते हैं कि उनके एक पूर्वज, ब्राह्मण–कुलोत्पन्न अत्रिगुप्त, मध्यदेश अथवा अंतर्वेदी (वर्तमान उत्तर प्रदेश) में यशोवर्मन् के शासनकाल में रहते थे। अत्रिगुप्त अपनी विद्वता और शिव की परमभक्ति के लिए प्रसिद्ध थे। कश्मीर के राजा ललितादित्य ने जब कन्नौज पर आक्रमण करके यशोवर्मन को युद्ध में पराजित किया तो उसकी दृष्टि अत्रिगुप्त पर पड़ी। वह उनके पांडित्य और अनन्य शिव भक्ति से इतना प्रभवित हुआ कि उन्हें अपने साथ कश्मीर ले गया और अपनी राजधानी प्रवरपुर (वर्तमान श्रीनगर) में वितस्ता के तट पर सितांशुमौलि मंदिर के सामने उनके निवास के लिए एक सुंदर गृह बनवाया और निर्वाह के लिए उन्हें प्रचुर धन–संपत्ति प्रदान की।

इसके कोई 150 वर्ष के अंतराल के बाद अभिनवगुप्त अपने दादा वराहगुप्त का उल्लेख करते हैं जो ऐसे ही प्रकांड विद्वान और शिव के परम उपासक थे। ऐसा प्रतीत होता है कि प्रतिभा, पांडित्य और शिव की भक्ति उनकी वंश–परम्परा थी जो उनके पिता और फिर स्वयं उन तक बराबर चली आई थी। *तंत्रालोक* और *परात्रिंशिका* के प्रांरभिक मंगल श्लोक में, जो पुनः तंत्रसार में भी आया है, अभिनव शिव और शक्ति के भाव से अपने माता–पिता का स्मरण करते हैं और हम जान लेते हैं वे 'योगिनी–भू' अर्थात् उनके 'योगिनी–पुत्र' थे। उनकी माता का नाम विमलकला था और पिता का नरसिंहगुप्त, जो चुखलक के नाम से लोकप्रिय थेः–

विमलकलामय अभिनवसृष्टि महाजननी
भरिततनुश्च पंचमुखगुप्त रुचिर्जनकः।

1(तं॰आ॰ / व॰त्रि॰,1.)

बाल्यकाल में ही अभिनव ने अपनी अपार स्नेहशीला माँ विमलकला को खो दिया जिससे उनके मन को गहरा आघात पहुँचा। उन्होंने अपने मन को यह कह कर समझाया कि इस वियोग के द्वारा विधि ने उन्हें अपने जीवन के भावी मार्ग को अपनाने के लिए तैयार किया है, क्योंकि इससे उन्हें संसार के मूल बन्धनों को तोड़ने में सहायता मिलेगी।

पिता नरसिंहगुप्त का नाम अभिनव ने बड़े आदर से लिया है। उन्होंने पिता और शिक्षक दोनों रूपों में उनका पालन–पोषण करके उन्हें बड़ा किया। वे असाधरण विद्वान थे और शिव–चरणों में अनन्य रूप से अनुरक्त। अभिनवगुप्त के ही शब्दों में उन्होंने "सर्वशास्त्र–रस–मज्जन" करके शुद्ध ज्ञान और "शुभ्रचित्त" को प्राप्त किया था। गृहस्थ जीवन के आकर्षणों से वे पहले ही विमुख थे और एक विरक्त का–सा जीवन बिता रहे थे। अभिनव ने उनसे व्याकरण की शिक्षा ग्रहण की। किंतु पत्नी की मृत्यु से उनका मन संसार से इतना उखड़ चुका था कि उन्होंने संन्यास ही ले लिया जबकि उनकी आयु अभी इतनी अधिक नहीं थी।

अभिनवगुप्त ने 10वी शताब्दी के मध्य के आसपास जन्म लिया।

कुछ विद्वानों के अनुसार 950 ई॰ में, कुछ के मत से 940 ई॰ में और कुछ के विचार से 960 ई॰में, और वे 925 ई॰ तक, या फिर 920 ई॰ तक अथवा 915 ई॰ तक जीवित रहे। जिस कुल में उन्होंने जन्म लिया वह परम्परागत रूप से विद्या–व्यसनी और शिव के प्रति असीम श्रद्धा और भक्ति के भाव से आप्लावित था। इस बात के संकेत हमें स्वयं अभिनवगुप्त के अपने वचनों से मिलते हैं जो कि उन्होंने अपने ग्रन्थों में यहाँ–वहाँ अपने परिवार के अन्य सदस्यों का परिचय देते हुए कहे हैं। वे हमें बताते हैं कि उनके दादा वराहगुप्त थे – अपने समय के एक प्रतिष्ठित विद्वान और कवि। अभिनव ने स्वयं एक स्थान पर उनके एक पद्य को उद्धृत किया है। मनोरथ उनका भाई था और अंबा उनकी बहन, जिनका उल्लेख वे बड़ी भावपूर्ण भाषा में करते हैं। अंबा का विवाह कर्ण से हुआ था जो कि उसीकी भाँति उनका शिष्य था। अभिनव को अपने बहनोई की मृत्यु का साक्षी बनना पड़ा, किंतु उस समय उसकी अवस्था परिपक्व थी। वे क्षेमराज सहित अपने पाँच चचेरे भाईयों का उल्लेख करते हैं जो कि सब के सब आगे चलकर उनके शिष्य बने।

अभिनव हमें बताते हैं कि पहले वे वैष्णवों के पास गए, फिर बौद्धों के पास, उसके बाद शैव–सिद्धान्त के आचार्यों के पास। अंत में त्रिक शास्त्र के आचार्यों के पास जाकर उन्होंने आगम–विद्या के रहस्यों का परिचय प्राप्त किया।

अपने परिवार में व्याप्त विद्यानुराग ओर शिव–भक्ति के वातावरण की चर्चा करते हुए अभिनवगुप्त कहते हैं कि इस परिवार के सभी सदस्यों ने सांसारिक संपत्ति को तृणवत् समझते हुए शिव के ध्यान में ही अपने हृदय को लगाया। इसी वातावरण में अभिनव का मानसिक और बौद्धिक विकास हुआ और वे अपने जीवन के लक्ष्य को प्राप्त करने के मार्ग पर आगे चले। अभिनव आजीवन अविवाहित रहे। दारा–सुत मोह के पिटे–पिटाए और बन्धनमय मार्ग को उन्होंने नहीं अपनाया। *ईश्वर–प्रत्यभिज्ञा–विवृत्ति–विमर्शिनी* में उन्होने इस बात को एक स्थान पर स्पष्ट शब्दों में कहा हैः–

दारात्मज प्रभृति बन्धुकथामनाप्तः।

(ई.प्र.वि.वि. 3.2)

जीवन के परम लक्ष्य की प्राप्ति के लिए चिंतन–मनन और अनुभूतिपरक साधना का मार्ग चुनते हुए अभिनवगुप्त ने अपने समय में प्रचलित ज्ञान–विज्ञान की सभी शाखाओं के गहन अध्ययन में अपने आपको लगाने का निश्चय किया। ज्ञान–प्राप्ति की अपनी प्रबल जिज्ञासा को शाँत करने के लिए वे विभिन्न विषयों और संप्रदायों के जाने–माने आचार्यों और गुरुओं के पास गए। डॉ॰ नवजीवन रस्तोगी के अनुसार जिन गुरुओं के पास अभिनव ने शिक्षा ग्रहण की उनकी संख्या बीस से अधिक थी। ये सभी अपने–अपने क्षेत्र के विश्रुत विद्वान और, अगर आज की भाषा में कहें तो, विशेषज्ञ थे। एक ही गुरु के स्थान पर इतने अधिक गुरुओं के पास अध्ययनार्थ जाने के लिए अभिनवगुप्त की कुछ लोगों ने आलोचना भी की, पर उन्होंने अपने आलोचकों को यह कहकर चुप करा दिया कि जिस प्रकार एक भ्रमर एक पुष्प से दूसरे पुष्प पर जाकर रस एकत्र करता है, उसी प्रकार ज्ञान प्राप्त करने का इच्छुक शिष्य भी तो एक गुरु से दूसरे गुरु के पास जा सकता हैः

आमोदार्थी यथा भ्रङ्गः पुष्पात्पुष्पान्तरे व्रजेत्।
विज्ञानार्थी तथा शिष्यो गुरुवोर्गुरवान्तरं व्रजेत्।।

(तं॰आ॰ 22:45–46)

डॉ॰ रस्तोगी अभिनवगुप्त के गुरुओं को मठिकागुरु और ज्ञानगुरु, इन दो वर्गों में बाँटते हैं। उनके इन गुरुओं में आगम शास्त्र के आचार्य तो थे ही, बौद्ध, वैष्णव, जैन आदि सम्प्रदायों के धर्मगुरुओं तथा काव्यशास्त्र के विद्वानों के पास भी वे उनके सिद्धान्तों और साधना–विधियों के बारे में ज्ञान प्राप्त करने के लिए बिना किसी हिचक के गए। अभिनव हमें बताते हैं कि पहले वे वैष्णवों के पास गए, फिर बौद्धों के पास, उसके बाद शैव–सिद्धान्त के आचार्यों के पास। अंत में त्रिक शास्त्र के आचार्यों के पास जाकर उन्होंने आगम–विद्या के रहस्यों का परिचय प्राप्त किया। अपने गुरुओं के नाम गिनाते हुए अभिनवगुप्त, जैसा कि हम कह चुके हैं, सब से पहले अपने पिता नरसिंहगुप्त का नाम लेते हैं, जिनके पास उन्होंने व्याकरण, तर्क–शास्त्र और साहित्य का अध्ययन किया। उनके अन्य प्रमुख गुरुओं में वामनाथ ने उन्हें द्वैत तंत्रों के सिद्धान्तों से परिचित कराया, उत्पलाचार्य के पुत्र लक्ष्मणगुप्त से उन्होंने त्र्यंबकादित्य से आरंभ होने वाली अद्वैत परम्परा के अंतर्गत त्रिक, क्रम और प्रत्यभिज्ञा संप्रदायों के शास्त्र पढ़े, भूतिराज से उन्होंने द्वैतवादी शैव दर्शन, द्वैताद्वैतवादी शैव दर्शन, ब्रह्म विद्या आदि विषयों में मार्गदर्शन प्राप्त किया, भूतिराज तनय (भूतिराज के पुत्र जिनका उन्होंने अलग नाम नहीं दिया पर जो शायद हेलराज थे,) से उन्होंने द्वैताद्वैत शैवागमों के बारे में ज्ञान प्राप्त किया, भास्कर से उन्होंने स्पंद शास्त्र के सिद्धान्तों की शिक्षा ग्रहण की, भट्ट तौत काव्यशास्त्र, नाट्यशास्त्र, और भाषा–दर्शन जैसे विषयों में उनके गुरु थे, और अंत में शंभुनाथ के पास जाकर उन्होंने कुल संप्रदाय के दर्शन और साधना पक्षों का ज्ञान प्राप्त किया। इसके अतिरिक्त डॉ॰ रस्तोगी ने उनके गुरुओं में श्री चंद्रस्वामी, भव (भवभूति), भक्तिविलास, योगानंद, अभिनंद, शिवशक्ति, विचित्रनाथ, धर्मशिव, वामनक, उद्भट, श्रीभूतीश और अनिरुद्ध के नाम दिए है (*इंट्रोक्शन टु तंत्रालोक*, पृ॰ 34–35)। अपने गुरुओं के प्रति अभिनव असीम श्रद्धा का प्रदर्शन करते हैं। उदाहरण के लिए भूतिराज का नाम अत्यंत सम्मान के साथ लेकर वे उन्हें इस पृथ्वी पर साक्षात् श्रीकंठ शिव का अवतार कहते हैं। सब से अधिक श्रद्धा का भाव उन्होंने

जालंधर पीठ के शंभुनाथ के प्रति व्यक्त किया है जिनसे उन्होंने कुल और त्रिक संप्रदायों के सिद्धांत और साधना पक्षों के रहस्यों का ज्ञान प्राप्त किया। वे स्पष्ट स्वीकार करते हैं कि शंभुनाथ से भेंट होने से पूर्व शास्त्रों का मार्ग उनके लिए दुर्गम था, पर उनके अनुग्रह से सुगम हो गया। यह स्पष्ट नहीं कि कौल गुरु शंभुनाथ उनसे मिलने स्वयं कश्मीर आए या उनसे मिलने के लिए अभिनवगुप्त ने जालंधर की यात्रा की थी, पर उनके प्रति अपनी असीम श्रद्धा और गहरी निष्ठा को व्यक्त करते हुए वे *तंत्रालोक* में एक स्थान पर उनकी उपमा उस सूर्य से देते हैं जिसके चरणों (किरणों) के प्रकाश से उनके हृदय का कमल पूर्ण रूप से विकसित हुआः—

श्री शंभुनाथ भास्कर चरण निपात प्रमागत संकोचम्।
अभिनवगुप्त हृदयाम्बुजमेद्विचिनुत महेशपूजन हेतो।।

(त॰आ॰ 1:21)

इस प्रकार द्वैत और अद्वैत दर्शन भक्ति, साहित्य, व्याकरण, नाट्यशास्त्र, काव्यालोचन, सौंदर्य—शास्त्रीय सिद्धान्त, भाषा—दर्शन आदि अपनी अभिरुचि के क्षेत्रों में अपने गुरुओं से प्राप्त ज्ञान से ''बोधोज्ज्वल'' होकर अभिनवगुप्त एक चिंतक और आचार्य के रूप में सामने आए। उनमें जो असाधारण आध्यात्मिक शक्तियाँ गर्भस्थ शिशु के रूप में ही विद्यमान थी, वे और भी स्पष्ट विकसित हुईं और यह विश्वास किया जाने लगा कि योग के अभ्यास से उन्होंने भैरव अथवा एक जीवनमुक्त की अवस्था प्राप्त कर ली है। *श्रीपूर्वशास्त्र* (*मालिनीविजय*) का संदर्भ देते हुए अभिनवगुप्त ने *तंत्रालोक* में एक शक्तिपात पाए योगी के ये पाँच लक्षण दिए हैं : (1) रुद्र में निश्चल भक्ति, (2) मंत्रसिद्धि, (3) तत्त्वों पर नियंत्रण, (4) अभीष्ट फल प्राप्ति की सामर्थ्य, और (5) अकस्मात समस्त शास्त्रों के ज्ञान का उदय और कवित्व शक्ति का स्फुरण। (तं॰उन॰ 13:214—215, अनु॰ मिथिलेश चतुर्वेदी)

इस प्रकार द्वैत और अद्वैत दर्शन भक्ति, साहित्य, व्याकरण, नाट्यशास्त्र, काव्यालोचन, सौंदर्य—शास्त्रीय सिद्धान्त, भाषा—दर्शन आदि अपनी अभिरुचि के क्षेत्रों में अपने गुरुओं से प्राप्त ज्ञान से ''बोधोज्ज्वल'' होकर अभिनवगुप्त एक चिंतक और आचार्य के रूप में सामने आए।

इस बात के लिए जयरथ से बड़ा और कौन प्रमाण हो सकता है कि स्वयं अभिनवगुप्त में ये सभी असाधारण सिद्धियां विद्यमान थीं। अभिनव जिस अपार ज्ञान के आगार थे, वह उन्हें गुरु और शास्त्र के साथ—साथ स्वानुभाव से प्राप्त हुआ था, जैसा कि उन्होंने अपने ग्रंथों में बार—बार कहा है। निजी अनुभव पर बल देने से यह स्पष्ट होता है कि उन्हें अपनी बौद्धिक और आध्यात्मिक क्षमताओं पर पूरा विश्वास था। अपने अनुभव—सिद्ध ज्ञान के आलोक को अभिनवगुप्त ने अपनी कृतियों में छिटका कर अपनी ''रुद्रशक्ति शक्तिसमाविष्ट'' अवस्था का सब को साक्षात्कार कराया। शैवाद्वयवाद के के प्रतिपादन के लिए उन्होंने *तंत्रालोक* और *परात्रिंशिका विवरण* जैसे जो विशालकाय मौलिक ग्रंथ लिखे और उसके सिद्धांतों और अवधारणाओं की जो विस्तृत और अंतर्दृष्टिपूर्ण व्याख्याएं प्रस्तुत कीं, उनके कारण इस दर्शन के महानतम व्याख्याता के रूप में अभिनवगुप्त की ख्याति सभी ओर फैल गई। उनकी ज्ञान—गरिमा और आध्यात्मिक उपलब्धियों से प्रभावित होकर सिद्धांत, वाम, यामल, भैरव, कुल, त्रिक और एकवीर, उस समय के सभी शैव संप्रदायों ने एकमत से उन्हें अपने सब से प्रमुख आचार्य के रूप में स्वीकार किया। कश्मीर में हुए योगियों, सिद्धों, आचार्यों, योगिनियों के इस महासम्मेलन, जिसमें अभिनवगुप्त को यह प्रतिष्ठा प्राप्त हुई, का उल्लेख दक्षिण के एक महान शैव साधक मधुराज योगी ने अपने ग्रन्थ *गुरुनाथ परामर्श* में किया है। मधुराज योगी जो अपने आप को अभिनवगुप्त का एक शिष्य मानते थे, अपनी वृद्धावस्था में उनके दर्शन करने के लिए सुदूर चोल प्रदेश से कश्मीर चले आए। उस समय अभिनवगुप्त की सृजनात्मक शक्तियाँ अपने चरमोत्कर्ष पर थी। मधुराज योगी ने अपने ध्यान—श्लोकों में इस महान आचार्य का एक शब्द—चित्र खींचा है, जो कुछ इस प्रकार है:—

''श्री कंठावतार अभिनव के रूप में कश्मीर आए हुए भगवान दक्षिणामूर्ति हमारी रक्षा करें। उनके नेत्र आध्यात्मिक आंनद से घूर्णित हैं। उनके ललाट का मध्य भाग पवित्र भस्म से बने हुए त्रिपुण्ड्र से स्पष्टतः चिह्नित हैं। उनके कान रुद्राक्ष से सुंदर दिखाई देते हैं। उनके घने केश पुष्पमाला के द्वारा बंधे हुए हैं। उनकी दाढ़ी लंबी है, शरीर लाल है। कपूर, चंदन, केसर आदि के लेप से काली हुई उनकी ग्रीवा भव्य दिखलाई देती है। कंधों पर लम्बा यज्ञोपवीत लटक रहा है। वे चंद्रकिरणों के समान धवल रेशमी वस्त्र धारण किए हुए हैं और द्राक्षा के उद्यान के मध्य बने हुए स्फटिक—मणिमय मंडप में, जो चित्रों के द्वारा सुंदर है,पुष्पों मालाओं, धूप और दीपों के कारण बड़ी मधुर सुगन्ध दे रहा है, चंदन की गन्ध से सुवासित है, गीत, वाद्य और नृत्य से सतत गुंजायमान है और अभिज्ञात आध्यात्मिक शक्तियों वाले सिद्धों और योगिनियों से भरा हुआ है—वे मुक्तावलियों से अलंकृत वितान के नीचे, सुवर्ण की चौकी पर एक कोमल बिछौने पर वीरासन में बैठे हैं। मन को एकाग्र कर उनके चरणों में बैठे हुए और उनके द्वारा कहे गए प्रत्येक शब्द को लिखते हुए क्षेमराज आदि अपने सभी शिष्यों द्वारा वे परिचरित हैं और दो दूतियों द्वारा भी, जो उनके दोनों ओर खड़ी हैं, शिवरस (तीन रात तक जल में भिगोए अन्न से प्राप्त आसव) से परिपूर्ण पात्र एवं दाएं हाथ में ताम्बूल से भरी हुई पेटिका और बाएं हाथ में मातुलिंग (चकोतरा)

फल तथा कमल लिए हुए हैं। रुद्राक्षमाला पहने हुए उनका दाहिना हाथ जंघा पर रखा है और उनकी उंगलियाँ परम तत्त्व के साक्षात्कार को सूचित करने वाली मुद्रा (ज्ञान मुद्रा) में हैं। बाएं कर–कमल के नखों के अग्रभाग से वे वीणा बजा रहें हैं जो नाद (मूल संगीत ध्वनि) को उत्पन्न करने में समर्थ है।''

(डॉ॰ कांतिचन्द्र पांडेय के अंग्रेज़ी अनुवाद का मिथिलेश चतुर्वेदी द्वारा किया गया हिंदी अनुवाद–अभिनवगुप्त–गणेश त्र्यं देशपांडे, पृ॰ 8–9)

अभिनवगुप्त ने अपना सारा जीवन एक आचार्य और चिंतक के रूप में, आत्म–ज्ञान प्राप्त प्रबुद्ध योगी के रूप में, बिताया जिसे शैवाद्वय के विभिन्न मार्गो के अध्ययन और अभ्यास दोनों के लिए सिद्धि प्राप्त हो। ज्ञान–प्राप्ति की तीन अवस्थाओं–गुरुतः, शास्त्रतः, स्वतः अर्थात गुरु से, शास्त्र से और निजी अनुभव से– में उन्होंने निजी अनुभव पर विशेष बल दिया और निजी अनुभव से प्राप्त अपनी अंतर्दृष्टियों का अन्य ज्ञान–पिपासुओं तक प्रसार करने के लिए उन्होंने विपुल साहित्य की रचना की। *तंत्रालोक* और *परात्रिशिका विवरण, ईश्वर प्रत्यभिज्ञा विमर्शिनी* और *ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञा विवृत्तिविमर्शिनी ध्वन्यालोक लोचन* और *अभिनवभारती* जैसे ग्रन्थ, देशपांडे के शब्दों में, ''भारत की दार्शनिक प्रज्ञा और वाङ्मय में उनका बहुमूल्य अवदान है।'' उनके प्रमुख ग्रन्थों की कुछ विस्तार से चर्चा हम आगे करेंगे, यहाँ इतना भर कह देना अभीष्ट है कि अभिनवगुप्त मध्यकालीन भारत के एक परम मेधावी दार्शनिक और मनीषी के रूप में अपने ही जीवन–काल में सम्मानित हुए।

इस विश्व से, जिसे वे शिव का ही आत्म–प्रसार अर्थात् दिव्य समझते थे, उनके प्रस्थान के बारे में एक कथा प्रचलित है। कहते हैं कि इस बात का आभास होने पर कि उनके देह–धारण का उद्देश्य पूरा हो गया है, अभिनवगुप्त अपने बारह सौ शिष्यों के साथ कश्मीर में पर्वत की एक गुफा की ओर गए। पूरे रास्ते स्वरचित *भैरव स्तव* के श्लोकों को गाते हुए जब वे भैरव (वर्तमान बीरू) नाम की इस गुफा के समीप पहुँचे तो उन्होंने अपने शिष्यों को बाहर ही रोक दिया और स्वयं उसके अंदर प्रवेश किया। कहते हैं किसी ने उनको फिर इस गुफा से बाहर आते नहीं देखा। लेकिन कुछ विद्वान इस कथा को लोक–विश्वास से अधिक कई नहीं मानते।

कृतित्व

अभिनवगुप्त की ज्ञान–गरिमा का परिचय हमें उनके ग्रन्थों से मिलता है जिनकी संख्या डॉ॰ काँतिचंद्र पांडेय के अनुसार कुछ ही नहीं तो 44 है। यह संख्या उससे अधिक 60 के आसपास भी हो सकती है, पर सभी के संदर्भ हमें उपलब्ध नहीं हैं।

जिन छोटे–बड़े 44 उपलब्ध ग्रंथों को अभिनवगुप्त द्वारा लिखित माना जाता है, उनमें से 23 अब तक प्रकाशित हो चुके हैं। डॉ॰ नवजीवन रस्तोगी के अनुसार इनमें *अमरेश्वर स्तोत्र, देवी भुजंग* और *शिव स्तोत्र* नाम के तीन स्तोत्र सम्मिलित नहीं हैं। अभिनव द्वारा लिखे सभी ग्रंथों की काल क्रमानुसार कोई सूची बनाना संभव नहीं है, पर उनके द्वारा दी गई जानकारी के अनुसार *क्रम स्तोत्र* की रचना उन्होंने सप्तर्षि संवत् 4006, तदनुसार 990 ई॰, में की थी, और *भैरव स्तोत्र* की सप्तर्षि संवत् 4068 अर्थात् 992 ई॰ में, जबकि *ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञा–विवृत्ति–विमर्शिनी* सप्तर्षि संवत् 4090, तदनुसार 1014 ई॰ में लिखी गई। इससे यह अनुमान लगाया जा सकता है कि अभिनव पैंतीस वर्ष तक लेखन कार्य में सक्रिय रहे। डॉ॰ कांतिचंद्र पांडेय ने अभिनवगुप्त के लेखन कार्य को तीन चरणों में बाँटा है – तांत्रिक काल जब वे तंत्र–विषयक ग्रंथों के प्रणनयन में रत रहे, अलंकारिक काल जब वे काव्य–शास्त्र विषयक विवेचना की ओर प्रवृत्त हुए, और दार्शनिक काल जब उन्होंने दर्शन संबन्धी कृतियों का सृजन किया। किंतु इस वर्गीकरण को रेनेरियो न्योली आदि कुछ विद्वानों के विचार से सटीक नहीं माना जा सकता। उनका कहना है कि अभिनवगुप्त में ये तीनों अभिरुचियाँ हर समय साथ–साथ विद्यमान थीं। कभी वे तंत्र की ओर आकर्षित हुए तो कभी सौदंर्य शास्त्र की ओर मुड़े, और कभी उन्होंने दार्शनिक विषयों की ओर ध्यान केंद्रित नक भाया। अभिनवगुप्त ने साथ बौद्धांथों की भी रचना की शरत्व ग्रंथों का व्याख्यायित–विश्लेषित करने के उदेश्य स उन पर विवृत्तियाँ और टीकाएं भी लिखीं। प्रायः ऐसा हुआ कि उनकी विवृत्तियाँ और व्याखयाएँ मूलग्रंथों से भी अधिक महत्त्वपूर्ण और लोकप्रिय हो चलीं, क्योंकि उनको आधार बनाकर अभिनवगुप्त ने अपनी मौलिक उद्भावनाओं को प्रस्तुत किया। अभिनवगुप्त द्वारा लिखी गई प्रमुख कृतियों में *तंत्रालोक, तंत्रसार, परात्रिंशिका विवरण, ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञा विमर्शिनी, ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञा विवृति–विमर्शिनी, परमार्थसार, अभिनवभारती, ध्वन्यालोकलोचन, मालिनीविजय वार्तिक, भगवद्गीतासार संग्रह, पर्यंत पंचाशिका, तंत्र समुच्चय, तंत्रवटधानिका, घटकर्परकुलक* के अतिरिक्त *भैरव स्तोत्र* आदि उनकी अनेक स्तुतिपरक रचनाओं को रखा जा सकता है। इनमें से कुछ की संक्षिप्त चर्चा हम नीचे कर रहे हैं:

डॉ॰ कांतिचंद्र पांडेय ने अभिनवगुप्त के लेखन कार्य को तीन चरणों में बाँटा है – तांत्रिक काल जब वे तंत्र–विषयक ग्रंथों के प्रणनयन में रत रहे, अलंकारिक काल जब वे काव्य–शास्त्र विषयक विवेचना की ओर प्रवृत्त हुए, और दार्शनिक काल जब उन्होंने दर्शन संबन्धी कृतियों का सृजन किया। किंतु इस वर्गीकरण को रेनेरियो न्योली आदि कुछ विद्वानों के विचार से सटीक नहीं माना जा सकता।

तंत्रालोक

अभिनवगुप्त का सबसे महत्त्वपूर्ण और विशालकाय ग्रंथ है *तंत्रालोक*। सैंतीस आहनिकों में विभाजित यह ग्रंथरत्न कश्मीर

में विकसित सभी तांत्रिक दृष्टियों के सैद्धांतिक और व्यावहारिक पक्षों का विशद विवेचन करते हुए उनका समन्वित और सुव्यवस्थित रूप प्रस्तुत करता है। संपूर्ण तांत्रिक परंपरा को 'तंत्र प्रक्रिया' और 'कुल प्रक्रिया', इन दो विभाग में विभाजित करके यह उनके मूलभूत तत्त्वों पर प्रकाश डालता है। डॉ॰ रामचंद्र त्रिवेदी के शब्दों में कहा जाए तो यह शैव दर्शन, आचार, साधना, योग एवं तांत्रिक कर्मकांड का एक विश्वकोष है। विशाल तांत्रिक परिवेश में त्रिक और कुल के सहभाव से जिस अनुत्तर त्रिक की अवधारणा का विकास अभिनवगुप्त ने किया उसे ही आधुनिक शब्दाबली में कश्मीर शैव दर्शन का नाम दिया गया। कश्मीर में मान्य आगमों, विशेषकर *मालिनीविजय तंत्र*, के प्रामाण्य पर इसमें बंधन और मोक्ष और परम सत् के स्वरूप जैसे विषयों पर विचार करते हुए अज्ञान को बंधन का हेतु माना गया है और उसे मल के रूप में व्याख्यायित किया गया है। मल के निवारण हेतु इसमें उपाय चतुष्टय की परिकल्पना की गई है। यह ग्रंथ मोक्ष को व्यक्ति द्वारा अपने वास्तविक (शिव) स्वरूप की पहचान के रूप में परिभाषित करता है:

मोक्षो हि नाम
नान्यः स्वरूप
प्रथनं ही तत्।

अभिनवगुप्त का सबसे महत्त्वपूर्ण और विशालकाय ग्रंथ है *तंत्रालोक*। सैंतीस आहनिकों में विभाजित यह ग्रंथरत्न कश्मीर में विकसित सभी तांत्रिक दृष्टियों के सैद्धांतिक और व्यावहारिक पक्षों का विशद विवेचन करते हुए उनका समन्वित और सुव्यवस्थित रूप प्रस्तुत करता है। संपूर्ण तांत्रिक परंपरा को 'तंत्र प्रक्रिया' और 'कुल प्रक्रिया', इन दो विभागों में विभाजित करके यह उनके मूलभूत तत्त्वों पर प्रकाश डालता है।

तंत्रालोक में विवेचित अन्य प्रमुख विषयों में अज्ञान के पौरुष (आध्यात्मिक) और बौद्ध, ये दो भेद, विद्या और अविद्या, जगत की अभिव्यक्ति, परमशिव की स्वातंत्र्य शक्ति और कर्तृत्व शक्ति, उसकी विश्वोत्तीर्णता और विश्वमयता, बिं[illegible] [illegible]द, दीक्षा, याग, [illegible] शैव साधना और कर्मकांड से संबन्धित अन्य [illegible]त हैं। ग्रंथ पर जयरथ की 'विवेक' नाम की टीका है जो दार्शनिक सूक्ष्मताओं और अन्य असंख्य संदर्भों को स्पष्ट करने में विशेष रूप से सहायक है। ग्रंथ में अभिनवगुप्त ने अपने जीवन वृत्त से संबन्धित अनेक तथ्य भी दिए हैं। वे हमें बतलाते हैं कि इस ग्रंथ की रचना उन्होंने अपने भाई मनोरथ और अन्य निकट के शिष्यों के अनुरोध पर बुद्धि समाधि की अवस्था में प्रवरपुर में मंद्र के घर में रहते हुए की थी।

मालिनीविजय वार्तिकम्

यह ग्रंथ *मालिनीविजय तंत्र*, जिसे *अपूर्वशास्त्र* भी कहा गया है, की अभिनवगुप्त द्वारा की गई आंशिक व्याख्या है। आंशिक इसलिए कि इसमें *रुद्रयामल तंत्र* के कुछ ही श्लोकों की व्याख्या की गई है और यह अपने संपूर्ण रूप में उपलब्ध नहीं है। ग्रंथ के प्रकाशित रूप में केवल प्रथम श्लोक की ही व्याख्या मिलती है। *मालिनीविजय वार्तिकम्* का महत्त्व इस बात में है कि *मालिनीविजय तंत्र तंत्रालोक* का उपजीव्य और कश्मीर शैवाद्वयवाद का सब से प्रामाणिक आधार ग्रंथ है। इस तंत्र में प्रतिपादित सिद्धांतों, साधना–विधियों और कर्मकांड का अभिनवगुप्त की व्याख्या में विस्तृत विवेचन है। ग्रंथ के प्रकाशित रूप में न्याय शास्त्र के कुछ महत्त्वपूर्ण सिद्धांतों पर भी विचार किया गया है। *मालिनीविजय वार्तिकम्* की रचना अभिनवगुप्त ने अपने शिष्यों, कर्ण और मंद्र, की प्रार्थना पर की थी।

परात्रिंशिका विवरण

परात्रिंशिका विवरण रुद्रयामल तंत्र के समापन श्लोकों पर अभिनव द्वारा लिखा गया एक महत्त्वपूर्ण टीका–ग्रंथ है। *रुद्रयामल तंत्र* 64 भैरव तंत्रों में से एक है और कश्मीर शैवदर्शन के त्रिक संप्रदाय का आधार ग्रंथ माना जाता है। कुछ विद्वानों के अनुसार *परात्रिंशिका विवरण* का वास्तविक नाम *परात्रिशिका विवरण* है, क्योंकि अभिनवगुप्त ने भी अपनी विकृति में 'त्रीशिका' शब्द की व्याख्या की है और उसे पराशक्ति अथवा परमभट्टारिका संविद् देवी कहा है। परा संविद् देवी, जो विश्व की संचालिका इच्छाशक्ति, ज्ञानशक्ति और क्रियाशक्ति से अभिन्न होकर भी उनसे उच्चतर है, ही ग्रंथ का मूल वर्ण्य विषय है। इन तीन विभिन्न शक्तियों की मौलिक विभागशून्य अवस्था का ही नाम भगवती "संविद्भट्टारिका" है। मूल ग्रंथ, जिस पर अभिनवगुप्त ने अपना विवरण लिखा है, भैरव और भैरवी के संवाद के रूप में है। ग्रंथ के आरंभ में भैरव भैरवी से प्रश्न करती हैं कि "अनुत्तर नाम का वह क्या तत्त्व है जिसको जानने मात्र से ही 'खेचरी समता', अर्थात् परम चैतन्य रूप शिव से एकात्म्य की स्थिति प्राप्त की जा सकती है?"

अनुत्तर कथं देव सामा कौल सिद्धिदम्।।
येन विज्ञात मात्रेण खेचरी समतां व्रजेत।।

इस प्रश्न का भैरव जो उत्तर देते है उसमें ही त्रिकदर्शन का सार निहित है।

वस्तुतः *परात्रिंशिका* का संबन्ध वाक्–तत्त्व विवेचन अथवा भाषा–विमर्श से है। परासंविद् भट्टारिका वाक्–रूपा है अतः अपने विवरण में अभिनवगुप्त वाक् की चारों अवस्थाओं– परा, पश्यन्ती, मध्यमा और वैखरी को परिभाषित करने, और उनके विकास की व्याख्या करने का प्रयास करते हैं। संस्कृत वर्णमाला के 'अ' से 'क्ष' तक के वर्ण समूह को वे सृष्टि–प्रसार की प्रक्रिया के मूल स्रोत के रूप में प्रस्तुत करते हुए वाक्–विचार को कश्मीर शैव दर्शन के एक केंद्रीय विमर्श के रूप में प्रतिष्ठित करते हैं। *परात्रिंशिका विवरण* की रचना

अभिनवगुप्त ने मंद्र के घर में वत्सलिका की स्नेह–छाया में रहते हुए की।

बोध पंचादशिका

बोध पंचादशिका सोलह पद्यों की एक लघु काव्य–कृति है। जिसमें अद्वयवादी शैव दर्शन के आधारभूत सिद्धान्तों की सामान्य लोगों के बोध के लिए व्याख्या की गई है। अंतिम पद्य में कृति की रचना के प्रयोजन पर प्रकाश डाला गया है।

तंत्रसार

तंत्रालोक एक विशालकाय ग्रंथ है जिसकी सूक्ष्मताओं और विस्तारों में जाने की क्षमता सामान्य अध्येताओं में होना संभव नहीं। इसलिए वे इसे न तो पढ़ पाएंगे और न समझ पाएंगे– ऐसा सोचते हुए अभिनवगुप्त ने *तंत्रसार* की रचना की जिसमें उन्होंने अपेक्षाकृत सरल भाषा में उसके सार को प्रस्तुत किया है। इस बात को स्पष्ट करते हुए उन्होंने *तंत्रसार* के आरंभ में लिखा है:

वितसस्तन्त्रालोको विगाहितुं नैव शक्यते सर्वे। ऋजु वचन विरचतमिदं तु तंत्रसार ततः श्रुणुत।।

अर्थात– *तंत्रालोक* एक विशाल ग्रंथ है जिसमें अवगाहन करने की सामर्थ्य हर किसी में नहीं हो सकती। इसलिए सरल शब्दों में मैने *तंत्रसार* की रचना की है, उसे सुनो।

वस्तुतः *परात्रिंशिका* का संबन्ध वाक्–तत्त्व विवेचन अथवा भाषा–विमर्श से है। परासंविद् भट्टारिका वाक्–रूपा है अतः अपने विवरण में अभिनवगुप्त वाक् की चारों अवस्थाओं– परा, पश्यन्ती, मध्यमा और वैखरी को परिभाषित करने, और उनके विकास की व्याख्या करने का प्रयास करते हैं।

तंत्रालोक के 37 आह्निकों का सार–संक्षेप अभिनवगुप्त ने *तंत्रसार* के 22 आह्निकों में प्रस्तुत करने का प्रयत्न किया है, इसी में इस ग्रंथ का महत्त्व निहित है। *तंत्रालोक* की ही भाँति *तंत्रसार* भी बंध और मोक्ष पर विचार से आरंभ होता है और फिर मोक्ष के उपायों का वर्णन करता है। इसके प्रथम सात आह्निकों में तंत्रदर्शन की शैवद्वयवादी धारा के आधारभूत सिद्धाँतों को सामान्य साधकों के लिए स्पष्ट किया गया है।

तंत्रसमुच्चय और तंत्रवटधानिका

इन दोनो ग्रंथों में भी *तंत्रालोक* का सारांश दिया गया है। *तंत्रवटधानिका तंत्रसमुच्चय* की अपेक्षा और भी अधिक संक्षिप्त है।

ईशवरप्रत्यभिज्ञा विवृत्तिविमर्शिनी

प्रत्यभिज्ञा कश्मीर शैवाद्वयवाद की मुख्य और मौलिक दार्शनिक दृष्टि है जिसके विकास का आगमिक विचारधारा से सीधा संबन्ध नहीं। इसका विचार–सूत्र सर्वप्रथम आचार्य सोमानंद की *शिवदृष्टि* में दृष्टिगोचर होता है। सोमानंद द्वारा प्रवर्तित अवधारणा का विस्तृत विवेचन आचार्य उत्पलदेव ने अपने ग्रंथ *ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञा कारिका* में करते हुए एक नये दार्शनिक मार्ग के रूप में इसका विकास किया और अपने ही ग्रंथ पर एक विवृति भी लिखी जो कि अब उपलब्ध नहीं है। आचार्य अभिनव ने उत्पलाचार्य की स्थापनाओं का समर्थन करते हुए उनकी विवृति पर *ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञा विवृत्तिविमर्शिनी* नाम से एक व्याख्या–ग्रंथ लिखा जिसमें उन्होंने प्रत्यभिज्ञा दर्शन को एक अधिक विस्तृत वैचारिक परिप्रेक्ष्य में रखते हुए उसे नये आयाम दिए। आकार में अपेक्षाकृत बृहद् होने के कारण 16 आह्निकों के इस ग्रंथ को *बृहती विमर्शिनी* नाम दिया गया।

ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञा विमर्शिनी

अभिनवगुप्त ने उत्पलदेव की *प्रत्यभिज्ञा कारिका* पर 15 आह्निकों में *ईश्वर प्रत्यभिज्ञा विमर्शिनी* नाम की टीका लिखी जिसे आकार में अपेक्षाकृत छोटी होने के कारण *लघ्वी विमर्शिनी* कहा गया। *लघ्वीविमर्शिनी* को भी *बृहती विमर्शिनी* के साथ कश्मीर शैवाद्वयवाद का प्रमुख दार्शनिक आधार ग्रंथ माना गया। प्रत्यभिज्ञा का अर्थ व्यक्ति द्वारा अज्ञान के कारण विस्मृत अपने वास्तविक शिव–स्वरूप की फिर से पहचान है। अभिनव के अनुसार व्यक्ति आत्मविस्मृति में खोया हुआ शिव है और प्रत्यभिज्ञा इस विस्मृत स्वरूप को फिर से पहचान लेने की स्थिति है। वह पिछली स्मृति न होकर भूली पहचान है। लघ्वी और बृहती विमर्शिनी दोनों में शुद्ध दार्शनिक भूमि पर 'ज्ञान, स्मृति, अपोहन' शक्तियों के विवेचन के साथ बौद्धों के विज्ञानवाद का भी खंडन है और आत्मा के महेशरत्व, जगत के कारण आदि विषयों पर विचार किया गया है।

परमार्थसार

परमार्थसार 105 श्लोकों की एक पद्यबद्ध रचना है जिसमें कश्मीर त्रिक दर्शन का सार प्रस्तुत किया गया है। यह आदिशेष अथवा अंतनाथ, जिसे आधार भी कहा जाता है, द्वारा रचित 85 श्लोकों की इसी नाम की एक वैष्णव कृति का अभिनवगुप्त द्वारा किया गया शैव रूपांतरण है। आदिशेष (पतंजलि?) की कृति "आधारकारिकाओं" को उन्होंने शैवाद्वयवाद के दार्शनिक सिद्धांतों के अनुरूप व्याख्या के द्वारा पूरी तरह से एक नया रूप दिया है। अभिनवगुप्त ने कुछ कारिकाओं को यथावत् रखा है, कुछ में परिवर्तन किया है और कुछ नई स्वरचित कारिकाएं जोड़कर कारिकाओं की कुल संख्या 105 कर दी है।

भगवद् गीतार्थ संग्रह

आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त ने इस ग्रंथ में *भगवद्गीता* की शैवाद्वयवादी

दृष्टिकोण से व्याख्या की है। कौरवों और पाँडवों को मनुष्य की मनोवृत्तियों के प्रतीकों के रूप में प्रस्तुत करते हुए उन्होंने महाभारत युद्ध का एक आंतरिक घटना के रूप में वर्णन किया है जिसमें कुरुक्षेत्र बाहरी युद्धस्थल न होकर मनुष्य का मन है। अभिनव ने संशयों से व्याकुल और दुविधा से ग्रस्त अर्जुन और कृष्ण के बीच संवाद की व्याख्या मनुष्य के अंतरतम में उत्पन्न अस्तित्व के गहरे संकट के रूप में की है। इस संकट का समाधान करते हुए कृष्ण अर्जुन को गहरे जीवन–सत्यों के अर्थ गीतोपदेश द्वारा समझाते हैं। यहाँ यह कहना आवश्यक है कि कश्मीर के शैव साहित्य में भगवद्गीता को इसलिए महत्त्वपूर्ण स्थान दिया गया है क्योंकि कश्मीर शैवमत के अनुयायियों का यह परम्परागत विश्वास है कि भगवान कृष्ण को दुर्वासा ऋषि ने शैवागमों की शिक्षा दी थी।

ध्वन्यालोक लोचन

आचार्य आनंदवर्द्धन के ध्वनि सिद्धाँत की ध्वनि को पूरे देश में गुंजाने में अभिनवगुप्त द्वारा रचित *ध्वन्यालोक लोचन* नाम की टीका का बहुत बड़ा हाथ है। ध्वनिवाद के प्रबल विरोधियों की आलोचना का तर्कसंगत उत्तर देकर अभिनवगुप्त ने काव्यार्थ में व्यंजना शक्ति के महत्त्व को स्थापित किया। और ध्वनि के अंतर्गत से अधिक रस–सिद्धांत को महत्त्वपूर्ण स्थान दिया। *ध्वन्यालोक* की अभिनव द्वारा की गई व्याख्या को सभी परवर्ती आचार्यों ने प्रमाण माना और इस प्रकार भारतीय परम्परा के अंतर्गत काव्यालोचन के सर्वमान्य प्रतिमान स्थापित हुए।

अभिनवभारती

भरत के नाट्यशास्त्र पर यह अभिनवगुप्त द्वारा की गई सुप्रसिद्ध टीका है। भरत ने विभाव, अनुभाव, संचारीभावों के संयोग से रस–निष्पति का सूत्र प्रस्तुत किया, किंतु रस–निष्पति की स्थिति का स्वरूप क्या है, उसे उनका यह सूत्र स्पष्ट नहीं करता। अभिनवगुप्त के पूर्वाचार्यों, भट्ट लोल्लट, शंकुक, भट्ट नायक आदि ने अपने–अपने दार्शनिक दृष्टिकोण के अनुसार इसे स्पष्ट करने का प्रयत्न तो किया, किंतु किसी सर्वमान्य निष्कर्ष पर नहीं पहुँचे। अभिनवगुप्त ने सभी दृष्टिकोणों की परीक्षा करके रसानुभूति की प्रक्रिया का सूक्ष्म विवेचन किया और वीतविघ्न आनंदानुभव के रूप में उसकी व्याख्या की। उनके विचारानुसार स्थायी भाव वासना अथवा संस्कार रूप में सामाजिक के मन में स्थित रहता है जिससे विभावादि के संयोग से पाठक/प्रेक्षक के अंदर एक भावात्मक स्थिति व्याप्त हो जाती है। यह भावात्मक स्थिति काव्य सौंदर्य के चमत्कार द्वारा आंदानुभूति से संबद्ध हो जाती है। इस आनंदानुभूति के लिए पाठक/प्रेक्षक/श्रोता का 'सहृदय' होना आवश्यक है ताकि उसका काव्य–वस्तु से 'हृदय'–संवाद हो सके। अभिनवगुप्त इस चमत्कारात्मक अनुभूति और आध्यात्मिक अनुभूति को समान मानते हैं। वे इस स्थिति को उत्पन्न करने के लिए नव–नवोन्मेष करने वाली प्रतिभा के उदय की बात करते हैं। अभिनवगुप्त की *अभिनवभारती* टीका भरत की रस संबन्धी अवधारणा के साथ–साथ उनकी अपनी अनेक मौलिक स्थापनाओं से हमें परिचित कराती है। यह सर्व–स्वीकृत है कि रस–सिद्धांत को भारतीय काव्य–शास्त्र की परंपरा में प्रमुख स्थान दिलाने में अभिनवकृत *अभिनवभारती* की विशेष भूमिका है।

घटकर्पर कुलक विवृति

घटकर्पर कुलक बीस श्लोकों का एक लघु काव्य है जिसके बारे में कश्मीर में यह विश्वास किया जाता है कि यह कालिदास द्वारा रचित है। अभिनवगुप्त ने इस पर *घटकर्पर कुलक विवृति* नाम की एक विद्वतापूर्ण टीका लिखी है। इस टीका में अभिनवगुप्त ने कवि स्वातंत्र्य का समर्थन किया है।

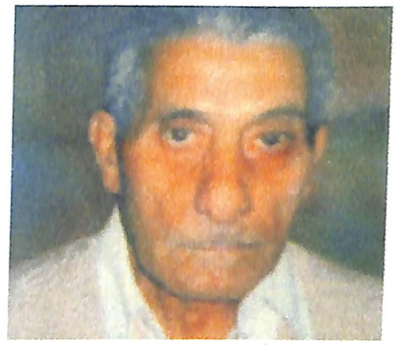
स्तोत्र

शैवागमिक साहित्य में दार्शनिक ग्रंथों के साथ–साथ भक्ति–रस आप्लवित स्तोत्र– काव्य लिखने की परम्परा रही है। अभिनवगुप्त ने भी भट्टनारायण और उत्पलदेव की भाँति काव्यमय भाषा में अत्यंत सुंदर नौ स्तोत्र लिखे हैं, जिनमें उन्होंने अपने हृदय को उंडेला है। इन स्तोत्रों को डॉ॰ काँतिचंद्र पांडेय ने अभिनवगुप्त पर लिखी अपनी अंग्रेज़ी पुस्तक के परिशिष्ट के रूप में अलग से प्रकाशित किया है। इनमें अभिनव ने अपनी समावेशात्मक भक्ति और दार्शनिक विचारों को अभिव्यक्ति दी है। ये स्तोत्र हैं: (1) *अनुत्तराष्टिका* (2) *परमार्थ द्वादशिका* (3) *क्रमस्तोत्र* (4) *परमार्थ–चर्चा* (5) *महोपदेशविंशतिकम्* (6) *भैरव स्तोत्रम्* (7) *देहस्थदेवताचक्रस्तोत्रम्* (8) *अनुभवविवेदनम्* (9) *रहस्य पंचदशिका*।

अन्य कृतियाँ

इन स्तोत्रों के अतिरिक्त अभिनवगुप्त की चौदह कृतियाँ ऐसी हैं जिनका उल्लेख उन्होंने अपनी अन्य कृतियों में किया है किंतु जो आज उपलब्ध नहीं हैं। अभिनवगुप्त की कृतियों ने एक ऐयी रचनात्मक ऊर्जा को उत्पन्न किया जिसका प्रभाव 17वीं शताब्दी के साहिब कौल और 18वीं शताब्दी के शिवोपाध्याय तक बना रहा । बीसवीं शताब्दी में अभिनवगुप्त के दार्शनिक चिंतन के प्रसार का प्रयास प्रसिद्ध शैवाचार्य स्वामी लक्ष्मण जू ने किया, जिन्होंने 1991 में चिर–समाधि ग्रहण की। अभिनवगुप्त के दार्शनिक और कला–विषयक चिंतन ने उत्तर पूर्व, दक्षिणपूर्व और मध्येशिया को ही प्रभावित नहीं किया, पूरे विश्व के दार्शनिक–बौद्धिक क्षितिज का विस्तार किया। यह प्रभाव मंदिर स्थापत्य, मूर्तिकला, धार्मिक विश्वासों और संस्कृतिक जीवन के क्षेत्रों में प्रत्यक्ष और परोक्ष दोनों रूपों में परिलक्षित होता है। शैवागम प्रसूत ज्ञान–प्रवाह के वे महानतम प्रतीक थे, जिसे समझने के बिना भारतीय संस्कृति की संपूर्ण अवधारणा संभव ही नहीं है।

दर्शन



अभिनवगुप्त और उनका 'परमार्थसार'

स्व. प्रो. नीलकंठ गुर्टू

भगवती शारदा के मनभावन निवासस्थल एवं समग्र भारतवर्ष के रत्नमंडित किरीट तुल्य कश्मीर के सुदूर पूर्वकालीन अद्वैत तंत्रों, जिनमें अधिकांश के अब केवल नाममात्र ही अवशिष्ट रहे हैं, में वर्णित पूर्ण अद्वैतसिद्धांत को पराद्वैतवाद या परमाद्वैतमार्ग के नाम से जाना जाता था। वह अद्वैतवाद विशुद्ध रूप में सैद्ध–सिद्धान्त था। उसमें सिद्धान्तपक्ष अथवा दर्शन, एवं प्रयोग पक्ष अथवा साधना पद्धति का अलग–अलग विश्लेषण एवं विभाजन नहीं पाया जाता था। उसमें नीरस तार्किक वाद–प्रतिवादों एवं सर्वसम्मत मान्यताओं के खंडन–मंडन के लिए कोई स्थान नहीं था। उस समय आत्मज्ञान की पिपासा को शांत करने के लिए उत्सुक और यथार्थरूप में मुमुक्षु शिष्यगण पहले सिद्ध गुरुवर्यों की शुद्धभाव से परिचर्या करके उनसे अध्यात्म संबन्धी सिद्धान्त पक्ष की पूरी जानकारी प्राप्त कर लेते थे। उपरान्त उन्हीं के द्वारा उपदिष्ट साधना–पक्ष का धीरता से अभ्यास एवं अनुसंधान करने के द्वारा प्राप्त की हुई आत्मिक अनुभूति की अपार क्षमता से यथार्थ–तत्त्व का अपने अंतस् में ही साक्षात्कार करके कृतकृत्य बन जाते थे। वे लोग सूक्ष्मातिसूक्ष्म एवं रहस्यपूर्ण आध्यात्मिक विषयों को आंतरिक संवेदन से ही प्रमाणित कर पाते थे। ऐसा करने के लिए उनको हृदय पक्ष (चित्–विमर्श) की पूरी अवहेलना करके कोरे बौद्ध ज्ञान के लिए अपेक्षित प्रत्यक्ष आदि प्रमाणों की वशवर्तिता नहीं करनी पड़ती थी। तात्कालीन साधकों का इस तथ्य के विषय में शत प्रतिशत मतैक्य था कि सर्वव्यापी, सर्वतोमुखी एवं स्वयं–सिद्ध चित्–प्रकाशमय परमार्थ स्थूल इन्द्रियबोध पर आधारित उपायों से गम्य नहीं है–

उपाय जालं न शिवं प्रकाशयेत्–
घटेन किं भाति सहस्रदीधितिः।

वह परमार्थ–तत्त्व (स्वात्म–महेश्वरदेव) ईश्वरीय अनुग्रह एवं अपनी अनथक साधना के द्वारा, अपने ही अंतस् में निर्मल

ऋतंभरा–प्रज्ञा, दृढ़ आंतरिक अनुशीलन और आत्म–शक्ति को उजागर बनाने से ही स्व–संवेद्य बन जाता है, अगर अपने ही अंदर तीव्र जिज्ञासा का भाव उदित हुआ हो। वे उत्कृष्ट कोटि के साधक होने के कारण इस लक्ष्य को पाने के लिए व्यर्थ के तार्किक वादविवादों के द्वारा आध्यात्मिक गुत्थियों को सुलझाने में अपना अमूल्य मानव जीवन नष्ट करने के पक्ष में नहीं थे। यद्यपि 'तर्को योगांममुत्तमम्' – इस शास्त्रकथन के अनुसार वे लोग भी तर्क को योगसाधना का एक उत्कृष्ट एवं अपेक्षित अंग मानते थे, परन्तु अर्वाचीन बुद्धिवाद प्रधान युग में तर्क शब्द का जैसा अभिप्राय लिया जाता रहा है उससे उन प्रचीन लोगों का दृष्टिकोण नितरां भिन्न था। उनकी मान्यता के अनुसार सत्–तर्क का रूप शुष्क वाद या वितण्डा नहीं, प्रत्युत अपने अनुसंधान में प्रतिपल चित्प्रकाशमय परमार्थ के साथ आत्मिक एकाकारता के रूपवाली 'अहंभावना' को परिवाक्य, शास्त्रवाक्य और निजी अनुभूति इन तीनों का अपने अंतस् में गहरा अनुशीलन करने उपरान्त परमार्थ की टोह लगाने को ही वे लोग सत्–तर्क मानते थे। ज़ोर–ज़बर्दस्ती अपने पक्ष को सबल और परपक्ष को निर्बल ठहराने के अभिप्राय से किए जानेवाले शास्त्रीय घात–प्रतिघात को वे लोग निःसार वितण्डा मात्र समझते थे। इन्हीं कारणों से उनके लिए अद्वैतवाद के सिद्धान्तपक्ष एवं प्रयोगपक्ष का अलग–अलग विभाजन करना अपेक्षित नहीं था।

ईसा की आठवीं और नवीं शताब्दियों में कश्मीर में विशुद्ध बुद्धिवाद एवं भौतिक प्रत्यक्ष आदि प्रमाणों पर आधारित प्रखर बौद्ध तर्क का बोलबाला रहा। बौद्ध दार्शनिकों की मीमांसा शैली पूर्णतया अनात्मवाद पर आधारित होने के कारण तर्क बहुल थी। फलतः तत्कालीन शैव दार्शनिकों को भी उनके सबल तर्कों का खंडन करने हेतु उनसे भी अतिप्रबल तार्किक युक्तियों का आश्रय लेना अनिवार्य बन गया। इस प्रक्रिया में प्राचीन पराद्वैत सिद्धान्त के दार्शनिक एवं प्रायोगिक पक्षों का विभाजन किया जाना नितरां स्वाभाविक बन गया। सिद्ध वसुगुप्त, जिसको कश्मीर की प्रचलित लोक–परंपरा के अनुसार साक्षात् स्वयं महादेव ने स्वप्नावस्था में दर्शन देकर अद्वैत ज्ञान की दीक्षा दी थी, ने और उसकी शिष्य–परंपरा ने इस दुरूह कार्यभार को पूरा करने का बीड़ा उठाया। सब से पहले उसके प्रमुख शिष्य आचार्य सोमानन्द ने *शिवदृष्टि* नामक मौलिक सिद्धान्त ग्रन्थ लिख कर बौद्ध तर्क पर ऐसा ज़ोरदार कुठाराघात किया कि वह सहसा धराशायी हो गया। यह ग्रन्थ तर्कबहुल होने के कारण सर्वसाधारण जनसमाज के लिए इतना दुरूह था कि आगे चलकर उनके शिष्य आचार्य उत्पलदेव को *ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञा* नामक दर्शनशास्त्र लिखकर इसमें वर्णित विषयों का विश्लेषण

करना पड़ा। परन्तु उनके ऐसा प्रयत्न करने पर भी समस्या का पूरा समाधान संभव नहीं हो सका क्योंकि *ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञा* ग्रंथ भी साधारण प्रतिभा वाले शिष्यों के लिए लाभप्रद सिद्ध नहीं हुआ। ऐसी परिस्थिति में उनके ख्यातिप्राप्त प्रशिष्य आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त को उस पर '*विमर्शिनी*' एवं *विवृतिविमर्शिनी* नाम की गंभीर एवं पांडित्यपूर्ण विस्तृत टीकाएँ लिखनी पड़ी। उन्होंने भगीरथ प्रयत्न करके इन बृहती टीकाओं में पराद्वयवाद के दार्शनिक पक्ष की सूक्ष्मातिसूक्ष्म एवं तर्कपूर्ण विवेचना प्रस्तुत की।

इसके अतिरिक्त उन्होंने उस प्राचीन सैद्ध–सिद्धान्त के साधनापक्ष को भी पिछड़ने नहीं दिया। *तन्त्रालोक* जैसे विशालकाय ग्रन्थ और *परात्रीशिका टीका* जैसे महान टीका ग्रन्थ की रचना करके उस पक्ष का भी पुनरुद्धार किया।

आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त के समय तक आम जनसमुदाय में तर्कबहुल एवं दुरुह दार्शनिक विषयों को समझ सकने वाली प्रतिभा एवं अंतर्दृष्टि का ह्रास हो गया था। साथ ही अपेक्षित उपदेश एवं दीक्षा प्रदान करने के अधिकारी सिद्ध–गुरुओं की भी कमी हो गयी थी। फलतः परिस्थिति कुछ ऐसी बन गयी थी कि जहाँ एक ओर परमार्थ के जिज्ञासु शिष्य तो थे, परन्तु दूसरी ओर उनमें *शिवदृष्टि, ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञा* जैसे सैद्धान्तिक एवं *तंत्रालोक* जैसे प्रायोगिक ग्रन्थों को समझ सकने की धिषणा का अभाव था। भगवान् अभिनव की दृष्टि से यह बात भी ओझल नहीं थी। उन्होंने सुकुमार मति वाले शिष्यों को निराश होने से बचाने के लिए अतिसरल एवं तार्किक उलझनों से रहित लघुग्रन्थों की रचना करने का भी बीड़ा उठाया। उनके ऐसे लघु ग्रन्थों में *परमार्थसार* एवं *बोध–पंचदशिका* इत्यादि ग्रन्थ सरल प्रतिभावाले शिष्यों के लिए अतीव लाभप्रद बन गए।

ऐसे लघु ग्रन्थों की रचना करने की प्रक्रिया में उन्होंने किसी ऐसे ग्रंथ की रचना करने का प्रयत्न किया जो कलेवर एवं भाषा की दृष्टि से लघु एवं सरल तो हो, परन्तु जिसमें पराद्वयवाद के लगभग सारे प्रमुख सैद्धान्तिक एवं साधनात्मक विषयों का संक्षिप्त समावेश भी हो, ताकि जिज्ञासु शिष्यों की जानकारी अधूरी न रहने पाए और उनमें उल्लिखित उच्चकोटि के ग्रन्थों का अध्ययन करने के लिए अपेक्षित पृष्ठभूमि भी तैयार हो सके। इस अभिप्राय को सिद्ध करने हेतु उन्होंने एक प्राचीन आचार्य आधार मुनि के द्वारा विचरित आधार कारिकाओं का चयन किया। प्राचीन भारतीय परंपरा के अनुसार आधार शेषनाग का नाम है। व्याख्याकार योगराज के विचारानुसार प्रस्तुत संदर्भ में आधार मुनि से किसी अतिप्रचीन सिद्धगुरु शेष मुनि का अभिप्राय है। अनन्त मुनि भी इसका नामान्तर रहा है। अस्तु, जो भी हो, आचार्य अभिनव ने उन्हीं आधार कारिकाओं में कहीं–कहीं शैव दृष्टिकोण के अनुसार संस्कार करके और अपनी ओर से भी कुछ नई कारिकाएँ जोड़कर शैव ग्रंथ का रूप दे दिया। उसी का नाम *परमार्थसार* है।

'परमार्थ=परम + अर्थ' – इस शब्द से सब से उत्कृष्ट प्रयोजन का अभिप्राय है। मानव जीवन पाकर मात्र एक ही सर्वोत्कृष्ट प्रयोजन हो सकता है, और वह है स्वात्म–साक्षात्कार पाकर आवागमन से निस्तार पाना। जिस ग्रंथ में उसी महान प्रयोजन को सार रूप में समझाने और सरलतम उपाय से उसको सिद्ध कर सकने का मार्गदर्शन किया हो उसका 'परमार्थसार' यह बिल्कुल औचित्यपूर्ण नाम है।

इसके अतिरिक्त मूल आधारकारिकाओं का नामान्तर भी *परमार्थसार* ही रहा था। आचार्य अभिनव ने प्रस्तुत *परमार्थसार* की दूसरी और तीसरी कारिकाओं में इस बात का उल्लेख किया है कि उस सुदुर भूतकाल में किसी वीतराग शिष्य के उत्तर में उन्होंने उस शिष्य को परमार्थ संबन्धित रहस्य का सार अपनी आधार–कारिकाओं में समझा दिया था। उसी कारण से उस जमाने में भी मूल आधार कारिकाओं को *परमार्थसार* – इस नाम से जाना जाता था।

मूलतः वह *आधारकारिका* नामक ग्रंथ वैष्णव–अद्वैत संप्रदाय से संबन्धित था। आचार्य अभिनव ने उसी अद्वैत सिद्धान्त को शैव दृष्टिकोण से समझाने के अभिप्राय से मूल कारिकाओं में संस्कार करके *परमार्थसार* का रूप दे दिया। यदि ऐसा कहा जाए कि आचार्य जी ने ऐसा करके, वास्तव में, भारत के दो महान शैव एवं वैष्णव संप्रदायों में सैद्धान्तिक समन्वय करने का प्रयत्न किया है तो शायद कोई अत्युक्ति नहीं होगी।

परमार्थसार में परमार्थ का स्वरूप–निर्धारण, छत्तीस तत्त्वों वाली जगत्–रूपता का विकास, सृष्टि की प्रक्रिया, मुक्ति एवं बंधन का रूप, जीवन्मुक्ति की परिभाषा, अक्रम एवं सक्रम शक्तिपात और ज्ञानयोग एवं क्रियायोग पर आधारित साधनाक्रम इत्यादि विषयों को, शैव मान्यताओं के अनुसार, सुगम रीति से समझाया गया है। थोड़े से संस्कृत ज्ञान को रखनेवाला जिज्ञासु भी इस ग्रन्थ का सम्यक् अध्ययन करने से *ईश्वर–प्रत्यभिज्ञा* इत्यादि उच्चकोटि के रहस्यग्रन्थों का अध्ययन कर सकता है। इस ग्रन्थ पर आचार्य अभिनव के प्रशिष्य एवं श्री क्षेमराज के शिष्य योगराज ने अतिसरल एवं सारग्राहिणी व्याख्या लिखी है।

(स्वर्गीय लेखक द्वारा *परमार्थसार* पर लिखी भूमिका)

स्व॰ प्रो॰ नीलकंठ गुर्टू (1925–2008) संस्कृत और कश्मीर शैव दर्शन के एक शीर्षस्थ विद्वान थे। कुछ समय जम्मू–कश्मीर राज्य के शोध एवं प्रकाशन विभाग में मुख्य पंडित के रूप में कार्य करने के पश्चात 1955 में कश्मीर में गर्वनमेंट कॉलेज, सोपुर में हिंदी–संस्कृत प्राध्यापक नियुक्त हुए और 1958 में अमरसिंह कॉलेज, श्रीनगर में हिंदी–संस्कृत प्राध्यापक के पद पर आसीन हुए जहां वे अपने अवकाश ग्रहण करने के समय तक अध्यापन कार्य करते रहे। उन्होंने 'परात्रिशिका विवरण', 'स्पंदकारिका' और 'परमार्थसार' जैसे कश्मीर शैव दर्शन के आधारग्रंथों का विस्तृत शोधपूर्ण भूमिकाओं सहित हिंदी में अनुवाद किया और कश्मीर के तीर्थस्थानों के विषय में भी अनेक पुस्तकें लिखीं।

भाषा-दर्शन



काश्मीर शिवाद्वयवाद में वाक् तत्त्व विचार

डॉ॰ मीरा रस्तोगी

भारतीय परम्परा में वाक् की धारणा दार्शनिक चिन्तन का केन्द्रीय प्रत्यय रही है। सम्भवतः इसका कारण यह है कि वाक् की धारणा जीवन और जग्त के दो नितान्त भिन्न क्षेत्रों को जोड़ने में अद्भुत सेतु का काम करती है, अतः दर्शन, जिसका मुख्य लक्ष्य जीवन और जगत् की व्याख्या है, के लिए इस वाक् तत्त्व पर विचार करना आवश्यक हो जाता है। बुद्धि का अध्यवसायात्मक व्यापार बिना शब्द योजना के सम्भव नहीं है अतः मूल सत् के स्वरूपानुसंधान में संलग्न होकर भी सम् के स्वरूप की व्याख्या के लिए इस वाक् तत्त्व की अपेक्षा होती है। वैदिक चिन्तन में जहाँ नाम – रूपात्मक जगत की कल्पना है वहाँ भी वाक् तत्त्व के महत्त्व को स्पष्टतः रेखांकित ही किया गया है।[1] भारतीय दर्शन के विविध सम्प्रदाय अलग – अलग तरह से इसका विवेचन करते हैं। वस्तुवादी न्याय वैशेषिक सम्प्रदाय सत्ता की जिन जागतिक श्रेणियों (categories) की कल्पना करता है उन्हें स्पष्टतः प्रमेय व पदार्थ करता है। ये प्रमेय व पदार्थ संज्ञायें सत् को ज्ञान और वाक् से अभिन्न सिद्ध करती हैं। वस्तुवादी सांख्य सम्प्रदाय में वाक् महत् तत्त्व के अध्यवसायात्मक व्यापार का ही अंग है। प्रत्ययवादी दृष्टि वाले अद्वैत वेदान्त में वाक् की कृतकार्यता जागतिक व्यवहार की व्याख्या में तो स्पष्ट है परन्तु परम सत् से इसका संस्पर्श भी नहीं होता, अन्यथा उसकी शुद्धता, निर्विकारिता खण्डित हो जायेगी। प्रत्ययवादी बौद्ध मत भी परमसत् के स्वरूप में वाक् का प्रवेश नहीं स्वीकारता। परन्तु इनके विपरीत परम आगमविद् भर्तृहरि ज्ञान के लिए शब्द की अनिवार्यता स्वीकार करते हुए वाक् को परमसत् रूप ही मान लेते हैं। उनकी दृष्टि में तो शब्द ही अर्थभाव से विवर्तित होता है।[2] सारा ज्ञान शब्दानुविद्ध है और पदार्थ की ज्ञान से व्यतिरिक्त सत्ता ही नहीं है। शब्द की इसी सामर्थ्य को बताने के लिए यहाँ शब्द को ब्रह्म मान लिया गया है।

वैदिक चिन्तन में जहाँ नाम – रूपात्मक जगत की कल्पना है वहाँ भी वाक् तत्त्व के महत्त्व को स्पष्टतः रेखांकित ही किया गया है। भारतीय दर्शन के विविध सम्प्रदाय अलग – अलग तरह से इसका विवेचन करते हैं।

आगम संस्कृति से उद्भूत काश्मीर शिवाद्वयवाद भी प्रत्ययवादी सम्प्रदाय है, जहाँ एक ही पूर्ण तत्त्व को मूल कारण मानकर उसी से सारे जगत् का विकास बताया गया है। यह पूर्ण तत्त्व प्रमाता रूप है जिसके ज्ञान के आकार रूप में ही सारे पदार्थो की सत्ता है। वह पूर्ण प्रकाश तत्त्व ही अपने आप को नाना रूपों में आभासित करता है। ये नाना रूप उसके आभास (संकुचित प्रकाश) ही हैं। यह सारा भेदन उसकी अपनी चेतना के स्तर पर ही घटित होता है जिसको स्पष्ट भाषा में उसके विचार ही कहा जा सकता है। इसी अवस्था को बताने के लिए यहाँ प्रकाश–विमर्श की दार्शनिक शब्दावली का प्रयोग किया गया है। परम प्रमाता या परम सत् प्रकाश–विमर्शमय तत्त्व है। विमर्श ही उस प्रकाश तत्त्व में किसी भी प्रकार के भेदन का निमित्त है।[3] यह विमर्शन वाक् की सहायता के बिना सम्भव नहीं है।[4] अतः वाक् परमसत् के स्वरूप में ही अनुस्यूत सिद्ध होता है।[5] जहाँ अन्य दर्शन सम्प्रदाय परमसत् की निर्विकल्पता या शुद्धता बनाये रखने के लिए उसे मन–वाणी से परे मानते हैं, वहीं यहाँ वाक् को परमसत् का स्वरूप धायक तत्त्व मानना कई आपत्तियों को जन्म देता है। इन्हीं आपत्तियों व आशंकाओं को विविध स्तरों पर उत्तरित करता हुआ यह सम्प्रदाय अपनी एक विशिष्ट तत्त्वमीमांसा प्रस्तुत करता है जहाँ वाक् के अनेक सन्दर्भ मिलते हैं –

(क) वाक् – परमसत् का स्वरूपाधायक तत्त्व
(ख) वाक् – ज्ञान–प्रक्रिया का अनिवार्य अंग
(ग) वाक् – जागतिक सर्जन का स्रोत
(घ) वाक् – चमत्कारात्मक बोध का करण
(ङ) वाक् – मल शोधन का अनिवार्य उपाय
(च) वाक् – तांत्रिक अनुष्ठानों का अभिन्न अंग (मन्त्र)
(छ) वाक् – योग–साधना का करण

(ज) वाक् – भाव सम्प्रेषण का सुगम साधन
(झ) वाक् – आगम प्रमाण रूप

आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त ने वाक् के इन सभी पक्षों के रहस्यों को उद्घटित करने का प्रयास किया है। वह वाक् के दार्शनिक, साहित्यिक, तांत्रिक – इन सभी सन्दर्भो को समान महत्त्व देते हैं। जहाँ वे एक ओर 'ईश्वर प्रत्यभिज्ञाविमर्शिनी' तथा 'ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञा विवृतिविमशिनी' नामक ग्रन्थों में वाक् के दार्शनिक सन्दर्भो को स्पष्ट करते हैं, वहीं 'ध्वन्यालोक–लोचन' तथा' 'अभिनवभारती' में वाक् के साहित्यिक सन्दर्भो को प्रस्तुत करते हैं। इसी प्रकार 'तन्त्रालोक', 'परात्रिशिका विवरण' तथा 'मालिनीविजयवार्तिक' में वाक् के तान्त्रिक सन्दर्भों की व्याख्या का प्रयास करते हैं।

इस प्रकार वाक् की धारणा काश्मीर शिवाद्वयवादी तत्त्वमीमांसा के आधारभूत प्रत्ययों में से एक है। इसका महत्त्व तो पूरी तंत्रधारा में स्वीकृत है, पर सम्यक् प्रतिष्ठा 'प्रत्यभिज्ञा सम्प्रदाय' के ग्रन्थों में आकर ही प्राप्त हुई है। सर्वप्रथम आचार्य सोमानन्द अपनी 'शिवदृष्टि' में शब्दाद्वयवाद की आलोचना करते हुए वाक के पश्यन्ती स्तर से भी ऊपर परा स्तर की कल्पना करते हैं[6], परन्तु वाक् तत्त्व के दार्शनिक सन्दर्भ यहाँ अस्पृष्ट हैं। आचार्य उत्पल जो प्रत्यभिज्ञा सम्प्रदाय के संस्थापक माने जाते हैं, अपनी 'प्रत्यभिज्ञा कारिका' तथा वृत्ति व विवृत्ति रूपी टीकाओं के द्वारा इस चिन्तन को दार्शनिक आधार देने का प्रयास करते हैं। वे परमसत् को प्रकाश विमर्शमय बताकर एक विशिष्ट संज्ञा से अभिहित करते हैं। वह संज्ञा है–चिति। चिति का अनिवार्य स्वभाव है–प्रत्यवमर्श।[7] यह प्रत्यवमर्श ही बाह्य प्रयत्नजन्य नहीं। इसी धारणा से स्वातन्त्र्य की प्रकल्पना विकसित होती है जो परमात्मा का ऐश्वर्य है। इसी क्रम में आगे स्फुरणात्मक स्पन्द की धारणा इससे जुड़कर परमेश्वर की गति (संकोच व विकास रूप) का भी स्रोत इसे सिद्ध करती है।[8] इस प्रकार यहाँ प्रकाश–विमर्श के सामरस्य में ही परावाक्, स्वातन्त्र्य तथा स्फुरण (स्पन्द) की धारणाएं अन्तर्गभित कर कई क्षेत्रों को एक साथ जोड़ दिया गया है। इनमें से परावाक् की धारणा जगत् विकास के प्ररूप को परिभाषित करती है, स्वातन्त्र्य की धारणा परतत्त्व की पूर्णता की व्याख्या करती है तथा स्फुरण या स्पन्दन का प्रत्यय सृष्टि विकास की प्रक्रिया को प्रस्तुत करता है।

वाक् की धारणा काश्मीर शिवाद्वयवादी तत्त्वमीमांसा के आधारभूत प्रत्ययों में से एक है। इसका महत्त्व तो पूरी तंत्रधारा में स्वीकृत है, पर सम्यक् प्रतिष्ठा 'प्रत्यभिज्ञा सम्प्रदाय' के ग्रन्थों में आकर ही प्राप्त हुई है।

पुनः उत्पल इसे महासत्ता कहकर सारे जगत् का आधार भी सिद्ध करते हैं।[9] इससे आगे वे 'अहंमृश्यता' तथा 'इदंमृश्यता' की शब्दावली लेकर जागतिक व्यवहार की व्याख्या करते हैं।[10] 'अहंमृश्यता' जहाँ अभेद – बुद्धि की वाचक है, वहीं 'इदंमृश्यता' भेदबुद्धि की। परन्तु यहाँ महत्त्वपूर्ण है मृश्यता जिसका सीधा सा अर्थ है स्पर्श। यह स्पर्श बाह्य इन्द्रियगत न होकर बुद्धि द्वारा विषय का स्पर्श या ग्रहण है। विषय के ग्रहण से उसके सन्दर्भ में एक विचार उदित होता है, और यह विचार वाक् की पूर्ववर्ती स्थिति है। इस प्रकार यह स्पष्ट है कि यह दृष्टि तो आचार्य उत्पल ही दे रहे हैं कि शैव तत्त्वमीमांसा में वाक् परमसत् का प्राणतत्त्व है, परन्तु इसे एक सुदृढ़ दार्शनिक आधार देने का काम आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त करते हैं। वे समकालिक चिन्तन पद्धतियों के सन्दर्भ में शैव तत्त्वमीमांसा को विकसित करते हुए, विरोधी मतों एवं उनके आक्षेपों का परिहार इस वाक् सम्बन्धी विशिष्ट दृष्टि की प्रतिष्ठापना करते हैं।

काश्मीर शिवाद्वयवाद में वाक् कुछ कहती ही नहीं है, कुछ करती भी है। यद्यपि यह करना अपने से बाहर कुछ करना न होकर मात्र अपने स्वरूप का विमर्शन ही है।[11] अतः यहाँ क्रिया भी ज्ञान के स्तर पर ही घटित हो रही है।[12] यह स्वरूप विमर्शन वाक् के माध्यम से ही होता है। आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त ने स्पष्ट माना है कि प्रायः सभी क्रियाओं से पूर्व जो करने की इच्छा है (इच्छामर्श) उसमें विषय अन्तर्गुम्फित है और यह विषय वहाँ स्थूल रूप में न होकर परामर्श रूप में ही है।[12] यह परामर्श उस वाग्रूपता का ही प्रतिफल है, क्योंकि यहाँ विमर्शांश के द्वारा प्रकाशांश का अभिलपन ही इस जगत् वैचित्र्य के उदय का निमित्त है। इस प्रकार परमसत् के स्वरूप में वाक् का यह अनुप्रवेश यहाँ किसी द्वैत की आशंका को जन्म नहीं देता, क्योंकि यहाँ तो स्वयं का स्वयं के द्वारा अभिलपन हो रहा है, किसी अन्य का नहीं।[14]

विमर्श का सामान्य अर्थ है विचार करने की सामर्थ्य। विचार शब्दों की ही आश्यानीभाव है। अभिनवगुप्त की दृष्टि में जब यही द्रवित होकर स्फुट वाणी के द्वारा अभिव्यक्त होता है तथा इन्द्रिय–संवेद्य हो जाता है, तभी सामान्य भाषा में शब्द संज्ञा से वाच्य होता है। इस प्रकार विचार शब्द की पूर्वावस्था है, परन्तु चेतना इस विचार की भी पूर्ववर्ती है। इस चेतना में मात्र सत्ता का बोध है, अस्तित्व का संवेदन है। यहाँ किसी प्रकार के भेदात्मक विनिश्चयन की स्थिति नहीं है।[15] विमर्श इसी चेतना की परिभाषिक संज्ञा है। यही विमर्श वाक् के सर्वोच्च रूप परावाक् से समीकृत है, जहाँ मात्र पूर्णता की चेतना है, वाच्य–वाचक–भावगत भेद दृष्टि नहीं। यहाँ स्वीकृत परमसत् के स्वरूप के द्विविध पक्ष–प्रकाश व विमर्श, दो धारणाओं के प्रतिनिधि हैं–प्रकाश है सत् या अस्तित्व का तथा विमर्श है सत्ता या अस्मिता का। सत् होने की प्रक्रिया, जिसे आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त ने 'भवनक्रियाकर्तृता' कहा है[16] और जो प्रकाशन

रूप है, के लिए यह विमर्श पक्ष ही उत्तरदायी है[17] अतः गति का घटक है यह विमर्श।[18] गति से अभिप्रय है सभी ज्ञानात्मक व क्रियात्मक व्यापार। इस गति पक्ष को और मुखरता देता है स्पन्द शब्द। यह गति यहाँ मात्र विचारों का उन्मेष और निमेष है, अतः गति – बोध के स्तर पर ही घटित है और इन विचारों को नियत आकार देने में वाक् का मूलभूत योगदान रहता है। इस प्रकार विमर्श का स्फुरण/स्पन्दन वाक् के माध्यम से ही घटित होता है[19] अथवा यों भी कह सकते हैं कि विमर्श, स्पन्द और वाक् एक ही प्रक्रिया के तीन आयाम हैं। इस सम्प्रदाय में वाक्–रूप विमर्श ही समस्त क्रिया रूपों में प्रतिफलित होता है।[20] अतः सृष्टि, स्थिति, संहार, तिरोधान और अनुग्रह के कृत्य इसी विमर्श के माध्यम से घटित होते हैं।

चेतना सदैव प्रत्यवमर्शात्मक है और प्रत्यवमर्श वाक्मय है।[21] विमर्श से प्रत्यवमर्श का भेद मात्र इतना है कि विमर्श संज्ञा जहाँ चेतना मात्र की वाची है वहीं प्रत्यवमर्श में विषयात्मक संस्पर्श भी विद्यमान है, यद्यपि यहाँ यह विषय उससे भिन्न नहीं है।[22] इस प्रकार वाक् सम्पूर्ण अन्तःस्थ विश्व की प्रत्यवमर्शक है। यद्यपि अभिलाप को वाक् का अनिवार्य स्वभाव बताया गया है, परन्तु यहाँ अभिलाप स्थूल रूप में न होकर अन्तर्मुख शिरोनिर्देश रूप में ही है। यह अन्तर्मुख शिरोनिर्देश की अवस्था हम किसी संगीत की धुन से भाव – विभोर होने की अवस्था में अथवा नाटक देखते समय अथवा किसी सुन्दर कलाकृति के सौन्दर्य से चमत्कृत होकर उसमें पूर्ण एकात्मता को प्राप्त व्यक्ति में स्पष्टतः देख सकते हैं। यहाँ पर जो एकात्मता की अनुभूति से जन्य पूर्णता की चेतना है, उसी का अभिव्यंजक है वह शिरोनिर्देश। वस्तुतः यहाँ परासंवित् की पूर्णता की प्रत्यवमर्शक है यह वाक्। यह आन्तराभिलाप की स्थिति है जहाँ संकेत निरपेक्ष शब्दन है। यहाँ संकेत–नियम पर आधरित वाचक–वाच्यभाव की स्थिति नहीं है, मात्र अहम् की चेतना है। यह पूर्णाहन्ता है जो सभी भेदपरामर्शों का विश्रान्ति स्थान है[23] इसी कारण इसे मन्त्र भी कहा गया है।[24]

चेतना सदैव प्रत्यवमर्शात्मक है और प्रत्यवमर्श वाक्मय है।[21] विमर्श से प्रत्यवमर्श का भेद मात्र इतना है कि विमर्श संज्ञा जहाँ चेतना मात्र की वाची है वहीं प्रत्यवमर्श में विषयात्मक संस्पर्श भी विद्यमान है यद्यपि यहाँ यह विषय उससे भिन्न नहीं है।[22]

यह 'अहम्–चेतना' या 'अहं विमर्श' ही कर्तृता रूप संरम्भ है जिसकी अभिव्यक्ति वाक् के माध्यम से होती है।[25] यही संरम्भ वाक् के विविध सोपानों–परा, पश्यन्ती, मध्यमा, वैखरी – से गुज़रकर बाह्यतया संवेद्य पदार्थों के रूप में सत्ता प्राप्त करता है।[26] इस प्रकार इसी वाक् के माध्यम से निर्विकल्प के विकल्पीकरण की प्रक्रिया सम्पन्न होती है।[27] आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त के शब्दों में यह 'अहं विमर्श' ही परम प्रमाता है जिसकी करणता दो रूपों में परिघटित होती है– संवेदन रूप में तथा शब्दन रूप में।[28] इसका अभिप्राय यही है कि प्रमाता का सर्जन दो स्तरों पर घटित होता है– पहला ज्ञान के स्तर पर तथा दूसरा शब्द के स्तर पर। प्रकाश पक्ष प्रथम स्तर के लिए उत्तरदायी है तथा विमर्श पक्ष द्वितीय स्तर के लिए। प्रकाश का विच्छेदन नाना अर्थरूपों में भासित होता है तथा विमर्श का विच्छेदन नाना परामर्श प्रकारों में। ये परामर्श नियत शब्द–जीवित है। प्रमाता की यह सर्जन सामर्थ्य या क्रिया अपने सूक्ष्म रूप में विमर्श है और इसी की अभिव्यक्ति उत्तरकाल में अन्तःकरण (बुद्धि, अहंकार, मन) तथा बाह्यकरण (ज्ञानेन्द्रिय, कर्मेन्द्रिय) रूप में होती है। यही आगे चलकर शब्द तन्मात्र एवं शब्द महाभूत के रूपों में प्रकट होती है। इसी दृष्टि से आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त का कहना है कि यह प्रत्यवमर्श ही परभूमि में परावाक् है, सूक्ष्मावस्था में वागिन्द्रिय रूप करण है तथा स्थूलावस्था में प्रमेय रूप शब्द है।[29] इससे यह निष्कृष्ट होता है कि इस तत्त्वमीमांसा में वाक् शब्द और अर्थ दोनों का नियमन करती है। वह पूर्णतत्त्व जो सारे अर्थों व शब्दों को प्रकाशांश तथा विमर्शांश रूप में धारण किये है, उनका बाह्य भासन इसी वाक् का कार्य है। अतः यहाँ शब्दाद्वैत की तरह केवल शब्द की प्रधानता न होकर शब्द तथा अर्थ दोनों की समान भाव से प्रधानता है और वाक् उनसे भी मूलभूत है। यह तो परमेश्वर की वह अभिव्यक्ति सामर्थ्य है जो उसके अन्तःस्थ के बाह्य विजृम्भण के लिए उत्तरदायी है।

वाक् के चारों स्तरों पर आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त अपनी 'विवृत्तिविमर्शिनी' में विस्तार से चर्चा करते हैं। परावाक् जहाँ सर्वाभिलपन की सामर्थ्य है, पश्यन्ती में बाह्याभिव्यक्ति की इच्छा का उदय होकर सारे विषयों की दर्शन–क्षमता है, मध्यमा में वाच्य – वाचक का भेद मानसिक स्तर पर घटित है। वैखरी वह अवस्था है जहाँ वह विचार स्थूल शब्द–रूपता को प्राप्त कर उच्चारण तंत्र के द्वारा अनेक ध्वनियों के माध्यम से स्पष्ट हो जाता है। इस वैखरी स्तर पर शब्द की विविध स्थितियाँ प्राप्त होती हैं। मुख्य रूप से तो यहाँ संकेत–सम्बन्ध के आधार पर नियत शब्द योजना की प्रधानता रहती है परन्तु साहित्यिक सन्दर्भ में शब्द की कई शक्तियों – अभिधा, लक्षणा, व्यंजना की चर्चा होती है जहाँ संकेत–ग्रहण से प्राप्त अर्थ का अतिक्रमण हो, कवि प्रतिभा से शब्द वही कहता है जो कवि कहलाना चाहता है। यहाँ शब्दार्थ विज्ञान कवि की विवक्षा पर आधारित है। अभिनवगुप्त वाक् के इस सन्दर्भ पर 'ध्वन्यालोक–लोचन' तथा 'अभिनवभारती' में विस्तार से चर्चा करते हैं।

वाक् को जागतिक सर्जन का स्रोत सिद्ध करने से जगत् विकास की प्रक्रिया को देवनागरी की वर्णमाला से एकात्म करने का प्रयास भी इस सम्प्रदाय के ग्रन्थों में प्राप्त होता है।[30] 'परात्रिंशिका' ग्रन्थ में 'अ' से लेकर 'क्ष' तक 50 वर्णों को अनुत्तर तत्त्व का बहिर्मुखी प्रसार बताया गया है, जिसे आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त अपनी विवरण टीका में 'आक्षरी सृष्टि' कहते हैं। वे तंत्रालोक के तीसरे आह्निक में भी सारी सृष्टि के प्रसार को इन्हीं 50 वर्णों से समन्वित करते हैं। तांत्रिक भाषा में इन वर्णों में से स्वरों को बीज रूप तथा व्यंजनों को योनि रूप माना जाता है और सृष्टि को इनके संघट्ट का परिणाम बताया गया है।[31] इन्हीं 50 वर्णों के व्यवस्थित क्रम को यहाँ मातृका कहा गया है तथा प्रचलित क्रम को छोड़कर मिश्रित रूप में प्रस्तुत इन वर्णों को मालिनी कहा गया है। मातृका वाक् का विकास पक्ष है तथा मालिनी संकोच पक्ष।[32]

परमेश्वर की इस सर्जन सामर्थ्य का प्रसार दो रूपों में होता है – वाचक रूप में तथा वाच्य रूप में। इसी को तांत्रिक भाषा में शब्दाध्व तथा अर्थाध्व कहा जाता है।

वाक् को जागतिक सर्जन का स्रोत सिद्ध करने से जगत् विकास की प्रक्रिया को देवनागरी की वर्णमाला से एकात्म करने का प्रयास भी इस सम्प्रदाय के ग्रन्थों में प्राप्त होता है। 'परात्रिंशिका' ग्रन्थ में 'अ' से लेकर 'क्ष' तक 50 वर्णों को अनुत्तर तत्त्व का बहिर्मुखी प्रसार बताया गया है जिसे आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त अपनी विवरण टीका में 'आक्षरी सृष्टि' कहते हैं।

शब्दाध्व में आते हैं वर्ण, पद और मंत्र तथा अर्थाध्व में आते हैं भुवन, तत्त्व, कला। ये तीन–तीन भेद स्थूल, सूक्ष्म और पर – रूप में स्थूलता से सूक्ष्मता की ओर आने की प्रक्रिया है। वर्ण सर्वत्र नियत रूप से एक जैसे हैं इसी कारण वे स्वारसिक माने गये हैं जबकि पद व मन्त्रों का उदय प्रयोक्ता की इच्छा के अधीन है। उसे जैसा अभिप्रेत होता है वह वैसे पदों व मन्त्रों का निर्माण करता है इसी कारण इन्हें प्रायत्निक या यत्नज कहा गया है।[33] मन्त्र वर्णों से ही निर्मित है। मन्त्र रचना में कुछ विशेष वर्णों का संयोजन इस प्रकार से रहता है कि उनमें विशिष्ट मंत्रवीर्य का स्फुरण होता है। मंत्रो में कूट–रूपता इसी मंत्रवीर्य को अक्षुण्ण बनाये रखने के लिए ही एक ही मंत्र के अक्षरों में किसी प्रकार का अन्यथाभाव किये बिना प्रयोग व अभिप्राय के भेद से उनके फल भिन्न–भिन्न हो सकते हैं। इनमें कुछ मंत्र संयुक्ताक्षरी अर्थात् स्वरों के बिना होते हैं जैसे– ह्स्र और कुछ असंयुक्ताक्षरी, जैसे– यं, रं, लं, वं आदि। परन्तु मंत्र निर्माण सामान्य व्यक्ति का कार्य न होकर मंत्रदृष्टा का ही कार्य है। वही वर्णों का क्रम निधारित कर मंत्र निर्माण करने में समर्थ है।

आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त इन तांत्रिक प्रत्ययों के विवेचन के अतिरिक्त इस बिन्दु पर भी विस्तार से विचार करते हैं कि शब्द किस तरह अर्थ को द्योतित करता है। इस विषय में वे आचार्य भर्तृहरि से पर्याप्त प्रभावित दिखाई देते हैं। यद्यपि आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त का अधिकांश शब्द–विवेचन शब्द या वाक् को सत् के स्वरूप में अनुस्यूत करने पर केन्द्रित है, परन्तु वे इसे भी महत्त्व देते हैं कि वाक् की वाचकता की सिद्धि कैसे होती है।

अभिनवगुप्त की शब्द–मीमांसा का आधार उनकी यही मान्यता है कि एकमात्र प्रमातृतत्त्व में ही सारा सृष्टि – विस्तार सिमटा हुआ है और उसी अन्तःस्थ का बाहर अभिलपन होता है। शब्द भी उसके अन्दर है और अर्थ भी साथ ही उनका वाचक–वाच्य भाव भी। यही दृष्टि सामान्य जीवन में भी प्रमाणित है। वक्ता उसी बात को बोलता है जिसकी प्रतिमा पहले से उसके मन में है। श्रोता भी उसको तभी समझ पाता है जब उस शब्द तथा उसके वाच्यार्थ की मानसिक प्रतिमा उसके अन्दर पहले से विद्यमान हो। किसी वस्तु के लिए शब्द का प्रयोग तभी सम्भव होता है जब बुद्धि के द्वारा उसके निश्चित स्वरूप का निर्धरण हो जाये।[34] अतः वक्ता तथा श्रोता दोनों अपनी बुद्धि में प्रतिभासित को ही बोलते हैं, सुनते हैं तथा समझते हैं। इस प्रकार वाचक शब्द तथा वाच्य अर्थ यहाँ परामर्श रूप ही सिद्ध होते हैं।[35] अतः शास्त्रीय भाषा में यही कह सकते हैं कि शब्द के दो रूप हैं– प्रथम तो श्रूयमान ध्वनियों से उपस्थित स्वलक्षण रूप शब्द तथा द्वितीय है वह अन्तःस्थ शब्द तथा द्वितीय है वह अन्तःस्थ शब्द जिसे सामान्य भाषा विज्ञान की भाषा में मानसिक प्रतिमा कहा जाता है, आचार्य भर्तृहरि बुद्धिगत स्फोट कहते हैं तथा अभिनवगुप्त परामर्श कहते हैं।[36] इस द्वितीय रूप की ही वाचकता है। वक्ता अपनी बुद्धि में स्थित परामर्श रूप शब्द को ही लक्ष्य कर उसके लिए ध्वनियों का प्रयोग करता है और इन ध्वनियों का ग्रहण कर श्रोता की बुद्धि में स्थित तदनुरूप परामर्श उद्बुद्ध हो जाता है और श्रोता के प्रति अपना अभिप्राय व्यक्त कर देता है।[37] यह श्रवण सामर्थ्य केवल ध्वनियों का कर्णछिद्र से प्रवेश करना नहीं है। यह एक प्रकार का प्रमातृ–स्वातन्त्र्य है जिसमें संकलन तथा अनुसंधान है आन्तरिक विमर्श के द्वारा इन संकलित ध्वनियों से सही अर्थ का निश्चय व बोध। इस संकलन व अनुसंधान के बिना कोई शब्द सुनते हुए भी सुनाई नहीं पड़ता।[38] यह सामर्थ्य प्रत्येक प्रमाता में अलग–अलग मात्रा में होती है। विविध ध्वनियों से अभिव्यक्त शब्द उस स्वरूप का भी परामर्शक है जो प्रमाता के मन में स्थित है। साथ ही यह उस अर्थ का भी परामर्शक है जो उसका वाच्य है।[39] वाचक शब्द जिस अर्थ को अभिव्यक्त करता है उसके भी दो रूप हैं– (1) मानसिक रूप (2) वस्तु रूप। वाचक शब्द का सम्बन्ध तो मानसिक या परामर्श रूप अर्थ से ही है वस्तु रूप पर तो उसका आरोपण किया जाता है।[40] यहाँ यह भी द्रष्टव्य है कि भर्तृहरि की तरह अभिनवगुप्त भी वाक्य को ही अर्थावबोधक इकाई मानते हैं। यह वाक्य प्रमाता की संकलना,

स्मरण तथा अनुसंधानमय बुद्धि का परिणाम है।[41]

अब वाच्यार्थ को मात्र अभिलापसंवलित[42] (बाह्यर्थ निरपेक्ष मानसिक सत्) मानने से वाक् का क्षेत्र बहुत व्यापक हो जाता है और बहुत से ऐसे शब्द सार्थक होते हैं जिनसे संकेतित वस्तु बाह्य जगत् में सम्भव ही नहीं है। जैसे–शश – विषाण, वन्ध्यापुत्र, आकाश कुसुम आदि। इसी दृष्टि को ध्यान में रखकर सम्भवतः आचार्य उत्पल ने वाक्रूपा चिति को महासत्ता कहा था।[43]

यहाँ यह भी द्रष्टव्य है कि यहाँ के आचार्य जहाँ विमर्श को परावाक् से एकात्म करते हैं वहीं प्रकाश को महार्थ कहते हैं, क्योंकि वही समस्त भाव – जगत की वस्तुरूपता के लिए उत्तरदायी है। परमेश्वर की माया शक्ति के द्वारा जब इन दोनों पक्षों का भेदन होता है तभी नानात्मक जगत व परामर्शों का उदय होता है। परमेश्वर की ही अध्यवसाय शक्ति इन दोनों का नामरूप से अतिरेचन करती हुई इदन्तया भासित वाचक – वाच्य जगत् का विस्तार करती है।[44]

इस व्यक्त वाक् की स्फुटतम अभिव्यक्ति का सर्वोच्च रूप आगम है। आगम पारमेश्वर विमर्श है। यह ईश्वरी वाक् है। यद्यपि आगम शब्द से लिपिबद्ध शास्त्रों को ही ग्रहण करने की परम्परा है, पर आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त की दृष्टि में आगम का अभिप्राय है वह मूल परावाक् जो सारे शब्दन का उत्स है, और यही उसके दैवी

इस वैखरी स्तर पर भी वाक् का मूलभूत रूप प्रत्यवमर्श ही है। इस व्यक्त वाक् की स्फुटतम अभिव्यक्ति का सर्वोच्च रूप आगम है। आगम पारमेश्वर विमर्श है। यह ईश्वरी वाक् है। यद्यपि आगम शब्द से लिपिबद्ध शास्त्रों को ही ग्रहण करने की परम्परा है पर आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त की दृष्टि में आगम का अभिप्राय है वह मूल परावाक् जो सारे शब्दन का उत्स है और यही उसके दैवी वाक् होने का प्रमाण है। यह आगम यहाँ परम्परा व प्रसिद्धि संज्ञाओं से भी अभिहित है जो कि पूरी तांत्रिक परम्परा का पर्याय है। अभिनवगुप्त इसे परावाक् से जोड़कर विमर्श तथा प्रतिभा नामों से भी पुकारते हैं। आगम यहाँ शब्द मात्र न होकर शब्दों के मूल में स्थित उस ईश्वरीय चेतना को व्यक्त करता है जो उन शब्दों के माध्यम से प्रस्तुत हुई है। इसी कारण आगम अर्थ के यथार्थ स्वरूप के प्रतिपादक हैं, शब्दन संक्रान्त शरीर हैं, अविगीत विमर्शात्मक हैं।

आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त के मत में आगम वह मूल विमर्श है जिसके द्वारा प्रकाश का अनुसंधान किया जाता है। यह विमर्श विविध आप्तजनों के माध्यम से प्रकट होता है। परमेश्वर विश्व–प्रकाशात्मा भी है तथा विश्व–विमर्शात्मा भी अतः वही इन सभी नाना रूपों में भासित होता है, वही विमर्शन करता भी है तथा कराता भी है, उसी की इच्छा से जो जिस शब्दन में रूढ़ है वही उसका आगम है।[45] यहाँ अर्थ विमर्शन के लिए शब्द–विमर्शन की अपेक्षा नहीं है वरन् शब्द–विमर्शन स्वयं में अर्थ–विमर्शात्मक है। शब्द स्व (शब्दरूप) तथा पर (अर्थ) दोनों को ग्रहण कराने में समर्थ है।[46]

(ईश्वर आश्रम ट्रस्ट द्वारा प्रकाशित पत्रिका 'मालिनी' से साभार।)

डॉ॰ मीरा रस्तोगी कश्मीर के शैवाद्वयवादी दर्शन के क्षेत्र में एक सुप्रतिष्ठित विद्वान तथा लेखिका हैं। संप्रति वे लखनऊ विश्वविद्यालय के संस्कृत व पाली विभाग में प्राध्यापिका के पद पर आसीन हैं। प्रकाशित पुस्तकें: *तांत्रिक शिवाद्वयवाद में इच्छा–स्वातन्त्र्य तथा नियमवाद*। डॉ॰ नवजीवन रस्तोगी के साथ *अभिनवा* का सहसम्पादन।

संदर्भ–संकेत

1. वाक्सूक्तम् ऋग्वेद
(ऋ॰वे॰ 10/125)

2. अनादिधनं ब्रह्म शब्दतत्त्वं यदक्षरम्।
विवर्ततेऽर्थभावेन प्रक्रिया जगतो यतः।।
(वाक्यपदीयम् (वा॰प॰), भर्तृहरि 1/1)

3. विमर्शो हि सर्वसहः परमपि आत्मीकरोति, आत्मानं च परी करोति, उभयम् एकीकरोति, एकीकृतं द्वयमपि न्यग्भावयति इत्येवं स्वभावः।
(ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञाविमर्शिनी) (ई॰प्र॰वि॰), अभिनवगुप्त, ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञा कारिका (ई॰प्र॰का॰ 1/4/13)

4. विमर्शस्य च संवेदनावलम्बित्वात् शब्दनरूपता स्वीकारेण विमर्शरूपताभिधानाय वाक्पदमुपात्तम्।
(ई॰प्र॰वि॰वि॰, अभिनवगुप्त, भाग–1,पृ॰ 104)

5. तदयं तिङन्तार्थ एव स्वातन्त्र्यात्मा विमर्शः प्रकाशस्य अहेयं वपुर्बोधस्य या वाग्रूपता शब्दनशब्दयितृरूपता शाश्वती संकेतादिवत्।।
(वही, भाग– 2, पृ॰183)

6. अथास्माकं ज्ञानशक्तिर्या सदाशिवरूपता। वैयाकरणसाधूनां प्श्यन्ती सा परा स्थितिः।। इत्याहुस्ते परं ब्रह्म यदनादि तटक्षयम्। तदक्षरं शब्दरूपं सा पश्यन्ती परा हि वाक्।।
(शिवदृष्टि, (शि॰दृ॰), सोमानन्द, 1/1–2)

7. चितिः प्रत्यवमर्शात्मा परावाक् स्वरसोदिता।
स्वातन्त्र्यमेतन्मुख्यं तदैश्वर्यं परमात्मनः।।
(ई॰प्र॰का॰ उत्पल, ई॰प्र॰वि॰ के साथ प्रकाशित 1/5/13)

8. सा स्फुरत्ता महासत्ता देशकालाविशेषिणी।
सैषा सारतया प्रोक्ता हृदयं परमेष्ठिनः।।

(वही 1/5/14)

9. वही, (1/5/14)

10. नाहन्तादिपरामर्शभेदादस्यान्यतमात्मनः।
अहंमृश्यतयैवास्य सृष्टेस्तिङ्वाच्यकर्मवत्।।

(वही, 1/5/17)

11. अन्तर्विभाति सकलं जगदात्मनीह
यद्वद् विचित्ररचना मकुरान्तराले।
बोधः परं निजविमर्शन सारयुक्त्या
विश्वं परामृशति नो मकुरस्तथा तु।।

(तंत्रसार, अभिनवगुप्त, आ॰ 3, पृ॰ 14)

12. ...क्रियापि आन्तरी संवेदनादव्यतिरिक्ता विमर्शरूपा स्वप्रकाशा।

(ई॰प्र॰वि॰वि॰, भा॰ 1, पृ॰ 101)

13. स्वामिनश्चात्मसंस्थस्य भावजातस्य भासनम्।
अस्त्येव न विना तस्मादिच्छामर्शः प्रवर्तते।।

14. अहं प्रत्यवमर्शो यः प्रकाशात्मापि वाग्वपुः।
नासौ विकल्पः स ह्युक्तो द्वयाक्षेपी विनिश्चयः।।

(ई॰प्र॰का॰ 1/6/1)

15. प्रकाशस्य शुद्धसंविद्रूपस्य......यः आत्मा......अहम् इति प्रत्यवमर्शः असौ विकल्पो न भवति।.....विषयरूपात् श्रोत्रग्राह्यात् शब्दादन्य एव अन्तरवभासमानः संविद्रूपावेशी शब्दनात्माभिलापो वागित्यनेनोक्तः....।

(ई॰प्र॰वि॰, ई॰प्र॰का॰ 1/6/1)

16. सत्ता च भवत्ता भवनक्रियाकर्तृतैवेति पुनरपि स एव अर्थः।

(ई॰प्र॰वि॰वि॰, भाग–2, पृ॰ 176)

17. विमर्शेनैव हि प्रकाशस्य भावानां च स्वरूपव्यवस्था भवति, तत्र प्रतिष्ठितस्पन्दरूपया प्रकाशव्यवस्था स्वभावमवभासस्य' इति न्यायेन विशेषस्पन्दरूपया भावव्यवस्थेति विभागः।

(भास्करी (भा॰), भास्करकण्ठ, सरस्वतीभवन ग्रन्थमाला, भाग–1, पृ॰ 263)

18. विमर्शरूपानधिकस्वभावा हि समस्ता क्रियेति उक्तम्।

(ई॰प्र॰वि॰वि॰, भाग–2, प्र॰ 199)

19. शब्दनरूपत्वं विमर्शनं यदान्तरं चित्स्वभावस्य अन्तरंग रूपं प्रत्यक्षादेरपि जीवितकल्पं, तेन यत् विमृष्टं तत् तथैव भवति...।

(वही, भाग–3, पृ0 84)

20. ...क्रियापि आन्तरी संवेदनादव्यतिरिक्ता विमर्शरूपा स्वप्रकाशा।

(ई॰ पृ॰ वि॰वि॰, भाग–202

...वाग्रूपा वृत्तिर्विमर्शक्रिया।... तथैवं परं प्रति जिज्ञापयिषुः प्राणे स्फुटीभूता वैखरी, शरीरे तु स्पन्दनरूपा क्रिया। इयति च सर्वत्र विमर्शरूपता अनुगता।

(वही, भाग –1, पृ॰104)

21. परमेश्वरस्वरूपप्रकाशप्रत्यवमर्शरूपा, परैव शक्तिः वाग्रूपतया प्रसृता।

(स्पन्दकारिकाविवरण (स्प॰का॰वि॰), रामकण्ठ,
काश्मीर संस्कृत ग्रंथावली, पृ॰ 148)

22. ....तत्र एकत्र विश्रान्तः प्रमाता स्वयं स्वेनैव प्रमातृतामहिम्ना तत्कांर्थतत्कारिराशिद्वितयसंस्कारवानतत्कारिवर्गात् हेयात् तत्कारिवर्गमुपादेयत्वेन विभतति तत एव प्रमातृव्यापार रूपेण उपादेयाभिमुखतया हातव्यमवाङ्कुर्वन् विमर्शः प्रत्यवमर्श इति उच्यते।

(ई॰प्र॰वि॰वि॰, भाग–2, पृ॰ 210)

23. प्रत्यवमर्शश्च आन्तराभिलापात्मकशब्दनस्वभावः तच्चशब्दनं संकेतनिरपेक्षमेव अविच्छिचमत्कारात्मकम् अन्तर्मुख शिरो निर्देश प्रख्यम् अकारादिमायीसांकेतिकशब्दजीवितभूत– नीलमिदं चैत्रोऽहमित्यादिप्रत्यवमर्शान्तर–भित्तिभूतत्वात् पूर्णत्वात् परा, वक्ति विश्वं अभिलपति प्रत्यवमर्शेन इति च वाक्, अत एव सा स्वरसेन चिद्रपतया स्वात्मविश्रान्तिवपुषा उदिता सदानस्तमिता नित्या अहमित्येव।

(ई॰प्र॰वि॰, भाग–1, पृ॰ 205–206)

24. सर्वस्य हि मन्त्र एव हृदयम्, मन्त्रश्चविमर्शनात्मा, विमर्शनं च परावाक्छक्तिमयम्।

(वही, पृ॰ 212)

25. प्रकाशस्य जडवैलक्षण्यं संरम्भः कर्तृतारूपो यः, स एव आत्मविश्रान्तिलक्षणो निरपेक्षत्वेन विमर्शोऽहमिति कथ्यते।
तदयं तिङन्तार्थ एव स्वातन्त्र्यात्मा विमर्शः प्रकाशस्य अहेयं वपुर्बोधस्य या वाग्रूपता शब्दनशब्दयितृत्वात् शाश्वती संकेतादिवत्।

(ई॰प्र॰वि॰वि॰, भाग–2, पृ॰ 172–3)

26 वक्ति स्वरूपं विमृशतीति वाक् तस्यां च ....परिदृश्यमानं वाङ्मयं प्रमितिलक्षणपरामर्शरूपसंवेदनानुविद्धतया शब्दनैकशरीरं विश्वं यथाक्रमेण विकसितं, पश्यन्त्यां विकासोन्मुखं, मध्यमायां विकसित्, वैखर्या पृथक्तया परामृश्यत्वेन लब्धविकासम्।

(वही, भाग–1, पृ॰ 25)

27 विमर्शश्च मायापदे विकल्पात्मा प्रत्याभाससंविश्रान्तः शब्दनैकशरीरत्वात् शब्दस्य प्रत्याभासं संकेतनात्।

(वही, भाग–2, पृ॰ 26)

28 ...अहमित्यवभासनोचितं प्रमातृतत्त्वं ज्ञानमिति प्रमाणमिति च वेद्योपरक्तमिति कृत्वा करणतया व्यपदिश्यते संवेदन भागेन, तथा वाच्यो परक्तमिति विमर्शांशेन अभिधानं शब्दनमिति करणतया व्यपदिश्यते, न तु कर्मतया पारतन्त्र्येण शुद्धेन। करणस्य हि कर्तृ विश्रान्तितयैव स्वातन्त्र्यरूप पार्यन्तिक परिस्पन्दास्पदत्वादेव अनन्यापेक्षया साधकतमत्वम्।

(वही, भाग– 2, पृ॰ 252–253)

29. प्रत्यवमर्श एव हि शब्दात्मा परभूमौ प्रमातुः सूक्ष्मभुवि वागिन्द्रियं करणं स्थूलदशायां प्रमेयरूपः शब्दः।

(वही, भाग–2, पृ॰ 265)

30. अकारादि विसर्गान्तं शिवतत्त्वं, कादिङान्तं धरादि नभोऽन्तं भूतपंचकम्, चादिञान्तं गन्धादिशब्दान्तं तन्मात्रपंचकम्, आदिणान्तं पादादिवागन्तं कमक्षिपंचकम्, तादिनान्तं घ्राणादिश्रोत्रन्तं बुद्धिकरणपंचकम्, पादिमान्तं मनोऽहंकारबुद्धि–प्रकृतिपुरुषाख्यं पंचकम् वाय्वादिशब्दवाच्या यादयो वकारान्ता रागविद्योकलामायाख्यानि तत्त्वानि।

(परात्रिंशिकाविवरण (प॰त्रि॰वि॰) अभिनवगुप्त, नीलकण्ठगुर्टू
द्वारा सम्पादित, मोतीलाल बनारसीदास 3/232)

31. बीजात्मना स्वराणां वाचकत्वं, योनिरूपाणां च व्यंजनानां चाच्यत्वं क्रमेण शिवशक्त्यात्मकत्वात्...। शिवात्मकस्वरबीजरूपाश्यानतैव शाक्तव्यंजनयोनिभावः....।

(प॰त्रि॰वि॰, पृ॰ 238–239)

32. शब्दराशिः स एवोक्तो मातृका सा च कीर्तिता। क्षोभ्यक्षोभकतावेशान्मालिनीं तां प्रचक्षते।।

(तंत्रालोक (त॰आ॰), अभिनवगुप्त, मोतीलाल बनारसीदास 3/232)

33. तत्राद्यो वर्णानां तेषां नैयत्येन सर्वत्रैवाविशेषात्, द्वितीयस्तु पदानां मन्त्राणां च ते हि वर्णवदपरिगणितत्वादनियता, इति योगीच्छानिबन्धन एवैषामुदयः। यो हि यस्याभिप्रेतो मन्त्रादिः स तस्योदयं कारयेत्, अतश्च परेच्छाधीनत्वादेषां प्रायत्निक एवोदयः।

(तंत्रालोविवेक (तं॰आ॰वि॰) जयरथ, पृ॰ 1265)

34. आभिमुख्येन यथारुचिकरणस्वातन्त्र्यर्प्यन्तया शब्दनस्वभावे प्रयोक्तृप्रतिपतृलक्षणे प्रमातरि धारणं प्ररोपणं विश्रमणा परामर्शनम्......।

(ई॰प्र॰वि॰वि॰, भाग–2, पृ॰ 249)

35. वाचकः इति परामर्शसारो, न तु केवल श्रवणविषयरूपः शब्दविशेषो मायीयवर्णानुप्राणनकृदमायीयः।

(ई॰प्र॰वि॰वि॰ भाग–3, पृ॰ 282)

36. 'वाच्यम्' इति प्रत्यक्षतोचितां स्वलक्षणां शब्दाच्च वाचकात् पृथग्भावमस्य निरस्यन् बुद्धिग्राह्यमेव निरंशं स्फोटात्मानं सामान्यलक्षणं तद्वन्मात्रं वा रूपं निरूपयति। (वही) वाचकः शब्दः श्रोत्रग्रह्यस्वलक्षणरूपतात्यागेन बुद्धिनिर्ग्राह्यं स्फोटरूपं सामान्यरूपं वा शब्दं दर्शयति।

(वही, भाग–2, पृ॰ 244)

37. प्रतिपरदयितरि हि असौ सक्रमः शब्दाऽक्रमविमर्शात्मक प्रतीति मूल इति तथैव प्रतिपाद्ये संक्रामन् प्रतीतिपर्यवसायी ततोऽनन्य त्वात् तस्य।

(ई॰प्र॰वि॰वि॰, भाग–2, पृ॰ 247)

38. श्रवण संपुट स्फुट क्रमिकं स्वस्पन्दमय वर्णराशिनिष्ठम् ऐकात्म्यापादनरूप 'संकलनानुसंधानाख्यं' स्वातन्त्र्यम्–तेन हि विना कलकललीनशब्दविशेषं श्रृण्वन्नपि 'न श्रृणोमि' इति व्यवहरति प्रमाता।

(प॰त्रि॰वि॰, पृ॰ 111–112)

39. यतो नीलशब्दः परामर्शकस्ततः स्वपरपरामर्शकत्वमेव अस्य स्वप्रकाशत्वम्।

(ई॰प्र॰वि॰वि॰, भाग–2, पृ॰ 256)

40. वक्ति अर्थ स्वाध्यासेन सोऽयमित्यभिसंधानेन।

(ई॰प्र॰वि॰, भाग–1, पृ॰ 240)

41. ये वयमेकां तावदनन्तचित्रतागर्भिणीं तां संविदात्मिकां गिरं संगिरामहे। मायीयेपि व्यवहारपदे लौकिक क्रमिक वर्ण पदस्फुटतामयी एकपरामर्शस्वभावैव प्रत्यवमर्शकारिणी प्रकाशरूपा वाक्।

(पृ॰ त्रिं॰वि॰, प्र॰ 239–240)

42. अभिलापसाधारणश्च अभिलापेन सह तस्य यः प्रथते सोऽभिलापसंवलित इति यावत्।

(ई॰प्र॰वि॰वि॰, भाग–3, पृ॰ 78)

43. सा स्फुरत्ता महासत्ता देशकालाविशेषिणी। सैषा सारतया प्रोक्ता हृदयं परमेष्ठिनः।।

(ई॰प्र॰वि॰, भाग–1, पृ॰ 210)

44. घटोऽयमित्यध्यवसा नामरूपातिरेकिणी।
परेशशक्तिरात्मेव भासते न त्विदन्तया।।

(ई॰प्र॰का॰ 1/5/20)

45. यथैव विश्वप्रकाशात्मा परमेश्वरः तथा विश्वविमर्शात्मा। तत्र बाह्यत्व ग्राह्यत्वार्थ क्रियातत्सहकारि वर्गस्य यथा प्रकाशः तथैव विमर्शः। तत् ईश्वरेच्छयैव यो यत्र विमर्शांशे एकीकृतः समुज्झितुमिच्छरति न उज्झितुं शक्नोति....। ईश्वरेच्छयैव यत् यस्य निरूढं शब्दनं स एव तस्य आगम.....

(ई॰प्र॰वि॰वि॰, भाग–3, पृ॰ 14)

46. नहि शब्दविमर्शनादपरमर्थविमर्शनं किंचित् शब्दस्य स्वपराविमर्शात्मकत्वात्।

(वही, पृ॰ 104)

नृत्य



अभिनवगुप्त और नृत्यकला

डॉ॰ सुधा मलैया

प्राचीन भारतीय नृत्यकला का शास्त्रीय स्वरूप वर्तमान में नृत्यकला (art of dancing) बोध से नितान्त भिन्न है। उसका विकास स्वतन्त्र रूप में न होकर 'नाट्य' के अभिन्न अंग के रूप में हुआ। यही कारण है कि नृत्यकला के शास्त्रीय स्वरूप पर लगभग 10वीं शती तक पृथक् रूप से विचार करने वाला कोई ग्रन्थ अभी तक अनुपलब्ध है। एक ओर नाट्य के सर्वाधिक महत्त्वपूर्ण पक्ष चतुर्विध अभिनय में आंगिक अभिनय का ही भारतीय शास्त्रीय नृत्यकला के रूप में विकास हुआ और दूसरी ओर वह संगीतकला के तीन प्रमुख अंगों गायन, वादन व नर्तन में से एक है। भरतमुनि विरचित नाट्यशास्त्र ही वर्तमान में उपलब्ध सर्वाधिक प्राचीन व प्रामाणिक स्रोत है, जिसमें नृत्यकला सम्बन्धी सर्वाधिक महत्त्वपूर्ण सामग्री संग्रहीत व संकलित है। नाट्यशास्त्र में नाट्य व नृत्यकला से सम्बन्धित विविध पक्षों का ऐसा विशद व सांगोपांग विवेचन हुआ है, प्रत्येक विषय की ऐसी सूक्ष्म व्याख्या हुई है कि नाट्य व नृत्यकला विषयक किसी भी प्रकार की चर्चा नाट्यशास्त्र के ही चारों ओर घूमती है, इसी से प्रारम्भ होती है और इसी पर समाप्त होती है। इसीलिए नाट्यशास्त्र को पंचम वेद नाट्यवेद कहा गया और वह इतना महत्त्वपूर्ण ग्रन्थ रहा कि उसके ऊपर अनेक टीकाएँ व व्याख्याएँ लिखी गईं।

> **यह कहना अतिशयोक्ति न होगा कि अभिनवगुप्त न केवल नाट्य शास्त्र के रचनाकाल से लेकर (लगभग प्रथम शती ई.पू. से प्रथम शती तक) नाट्यशास्त्र के टीकाकार के रूप में अभिनवभारती की रचना तक (10–11वीं शती) लगभग 1000 वर्षों के अंतराल की सर्वाधिक महत्वपूर्ण कड़ी है। यदि अभिनवभारती न होती तो भरत द्वारा उल्लिखित नृत्त, हस्तों, चारियों, करणों तथा नाट्य व रंगमंच से संबंधित अनेक रूपों के स्वरूपों को समझा नहीं जा सकता था।**

नाट्यशास्त्र पर सर्वाधिक महत्त्वपूर्ण टीका कश्मीरी शैवाचार्य अभिनवगुप्त विरचित अभिनवभारती (10वीं–11वीं शती) है। संभवतः इसीलिये भी कि यही एकमात्र टीका है जो वर्तमान में उपलब्ध है। अभिनवगुप्त नाट्यशास्त्र के ऐसे व्याख्याकारों में हैं जिन्होंने संपूर्ण नाट्यशास्त्र की विस्तृत व्याख्या की है। अपने गुरु भट्टतोत के मुख से नाट्यशास्त्र की जो व्याख्या सुनी थी, उसे ही उन्होंने अभिनवभारती के रूप में दूसरे जिज्ञासुओं के लाभार्थ लिपिबद्ध किया।[1]

नाट्यशास्त्र में वर्णित नृत्यकला के स्वरूप को समझने के लिए अभिनवभारती का आश्रय पुनः पुनः लेना पड़ता है, इसमें दो मत नहीं हैं। नाट्यशास्त्र में वर्णित नृत्यकला के सभी अंगों, नृत्तहस्त, चारी तथा करणों के स्वरूपात्मक विवेचन में, पाठ्य सम्बन्धी दोषों, नाट्यशास्त्र के मूल स्वरूप में हुए विकृतिकरण के प्रभाव तथा कालक्रम में नाट्य परम्पराओं के क्षीण होने के उपरांत सर्वत्र अभिनवभारती का ही आश्रय लिया गया है। अभिनवगुप्त की व्याख्याओं के द्वारा ही भरत की अनेक स्थापनाओं पर समुंचित प्रकाश पड़ता है।

वस्तुतः यह टीका इतनी प्रामाणिक एवं पांडित्यपूर्ण है कि अपने आप में इसका एक स्वतंत्र शास्त्र जितना महत्व है। इसी के कारण परवर्ती काल में नाट्यशास्त्रीय अध्ययन का मार्ग प्रशस्त हुआ। यह कहना अतिशयोक्ति न होगा कि अभिनवगुप्त न केवल नाट्य शास्त्र के रचनाकाल से लेकर (लगभग प्रथम शती ई.पू. से प्रथम शती तक) नाट्यशास्त्र के टीकाकार के रूप में अभिनवभारती की रचना तक (10–11वीं शती) लगभग 1000 वर्षों के अंतराल की सर्वाधिक महत्वपूर्ण कड़ी हैं। यदि अभिनवभारती न होती तो भरत द्वारा उल्लिखित नृत्तहस्तों, चारियों, करणों तथा नाट्य व रंगमंच से संबंधित अनेक रूपों के स्वरूपों को समझा नहीं जा सकता था। और न ही नाट्यशास्त्र के पूर्ववर्ती रचनाकारों तथा

नाट्यशास्त्र व अभिनवभारती के बीच के अंतराल के अनेक रचनाकारों, नाट्यशास्त्रकारों, संगीतकारों के बारे में कुछ भी जाना जा सकता था, यदि अभिनवगुप्ताचार्य ने उनका उल्लेख अभिनवभारती में न किया होता।



भरत कौन थे?

भरत कौन थे? वे भरत जिसने नाट्यशास्त्र की रचना की? विद्वानों के सम्मुख यह प्रश्न प्रारम्भ से ही है। इस बारे में मत वैभिन्न्य है। नाट्यशास्त्र व अभिनवभारती के अनुवादक व व्याख्याकर पं० मधुसूदन शास्त्री जिनके द्वारा अनुवादित व संपादित 'नाट्यशास्त्र' व अभिनवभारती का ही प्रस्तुत अध्ययन में आश्रय लिया गया है, के विचार से सर्वप्रथम भरत का उल्लेख प्रथम तीर्थंकर ऋषभदेव अथवा आदिनाथ के ज्येष्ठ पुत्र भरत के रूप में पुराणों में मिलता है। ऋषभदेव, स्वायम्भुव मनु के पुत्र प्रियव्रत के पुत्र आग्नीघ्र के पुत्र नाभिराय के पुत्र थे। अतः ये भरत स्वायम्भुव मनु की परम्परा में छठी पीढ़ी के थे। वही पहले भरत हैं और इन्ही के नाम से यह भूभाग भारतवर्ष कहलाता है।

नाभिस्त्वजनयत्पुत्रा 'पुत्राशताग्रज' महाद्युतिः।
ऋषभं पार्थिवश्रेष्ठं सर्वक्षत्रास्य पूर्वजम्।।
ऋषभाद् भरतो जज्ञे वीरः पुत्राशताग्रजः।
सौभिषच्याथ भरतं पुत्रां प्राव्राज्यमास्थितः।।
हिमाह्वदक्षिणं वर्षं भरताय न्यवेदयत्।
तस्माद् भरतं वर्षं तस्या नाम्ना विदुर्बुधाः।।

(वायुमहापुराण, पूर्वार्ध अध्याय 33)

मार्कण्डेय पुराण, नरसिंह पुराण, ब्रह्माण्ड पुराण आदि में इस भरत का प्रचुर वर्णन मिलता है।[2]

लोक में नाट्यशास्त्र के अनेक संस्कारों तथा अनेक लोगों की रचना मानने का मत अभिनवगुप्त से पूर्व ही प्रचलित हो चुका था। जैनाचार्य जिनसेन कृत आदिपुराण (लगभग 8वीं–9वीं शती) में प्रथम तीर्थकंर ऋषभदेव के पुत्र भरत को संग्रह श्लोकयुक्त शास्त्र (नाट्यशास्त्र) का ज्ञाता बताया है।[3] स्वयं अभिनवगुप्त ने इस तथ्य की पुष्टि की है कि कुछ नास्तिकधुर्य नाट्यशास्त्र को किसी एक लेखक की रचना न मानकर उसे एक संग्रह ग्रन्थ मानते थे।[4] यह संभव है कि नास्तिकधुर्य से अभिनवगुप्त का संकेत जैनाचार्यों को ओर ही रहा हो। किन्तु अभिनवगुप्त ने इस मत का खण्डन करते हुए भरत मुनि को ही नाट्यशास्त्र का रचयिता माना है तथा आदि भरत अथवा वृद्ध भरत या प्रथम भरत जिसने नाट्यशास्त्र की रचना की, उनके लिए अभिनवगुप्त मुनि शब्द का प्रयोग करते हैं। यद्यपि स्वयं भरत व अभिनवगुप्त ने एक स्थान पर संग्रह की व दूसरे स्थान पर संग्रहकार की चर्चा की है। अभिनवगुप्त के मतानुसार प्राचीन आचार्यों के संग्रहों से भरत ने उद्धृत करते हुए अपनी सहमति अथवा असहमति प्रकट की है। इससे सिद्ध होता है कि ऋषभदेव के पुत्र भरत संभवतः सर्वप्रथम नाट्य सम्बन्धी सूत्रों के संग्रहकर्ता हैं। किन्तु जिन्होंने इन सूत्रों को पुनः नाट्यशास्त्र संग्रह के रूप में किया उसके रचनाकार भरत मुनि ही हैं।

भरत का एक अर्थ है रंगमंच पर भावों के द्वारा रस का संचार करने वाले नाटक का पात्र। 'भरत भावैः रसान तनुध्वं भो भरताख्यां भजिष्यथ' – भावों के द्वारा रस का संचार करो' तुम्हारा नाम भरत संसार में भरत कहलाएगा।

नाट्यशास्त्र

नाट्यशास्त्र की उत्पति, रचनाकाल, प्रक्षेपणों, लघु–वृहत पाठों को लेकर भी जो भ्रम परवर्तीकाल में हुए, उनको सुलझाने में भी अभिनवगुप्त ही काम आते हैं। आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त के समय तक नाट्यशास्त्र के लघु व बृहत् दोनों पाठों की परम्परा थी। अभिनवगुप्त ने लघु पाठ को ही अपनी रचना अभिनवभारती का आधार माना था। अभिनवगुप्त परम शैव थे। अतः उन्होंने अभिनवभारती के प्रत्येक अध्याय के प्रारंभ में महेश्वर की स्तुति की है। वे प्रत्यभिज्ञा दर्शन, जो भगवान शिव का महत्त्व प्रकट करता है, के प्रर्वत्तक व प्रसारक आचार्य हैं। उसमें सृष्टि के 36 तत्त्व माने गए हैं और नाट्शास्त्र में भी 36 अध्याय है। सैंतीसवां उपसंहार अध्याय है' किन्तु नाट्य का विषय 36 अध्यायों में सम्पन्न हो गया है।

नाट्य

अभिनवगुप्त ने नृत्यकला के उसी स्वरूप का प्रतिपादन किया जिसका उल्लेख भरतमुनि ने नाट्य के रूप में नाट्यशास्त्र में किया। नाट्यशास्त्र में नाट्य सम्बन्धी शिक्षा का प्रवचन अर्थात प्रतिपाद्य है नाट्यवेद। प्रारम्भ में ही भरतमुनि, जब नाट्यशास्त्र का प्रवचन करने से पहले पितामह व महेश्वर को नमन करते हैं, तब अभिनवगुप्त स्पष्ट करते हैं कि पितामह देव ब्रह्मा नाट्यवेद के प्रवर्तक हैं, निर्माता हैं और महेश्वर आनन्दित हो संध्या समय में क्रीड़ाशील हो नाट्य की शोभा बढ़ाने वाला नृत्य करते हैं। अतः ब्रह्मा व शिव दोनों नाट्यवेद के अधिष्ठाता देव एवं गुरु हैं। अभिनवभारती, नाट्यशास्त्र की ही अभिनवगुप्त द्वारा की गई विशद व्याख्या है।

भरतमुनि के अनुसार नाट्यवेद की रचना, ब्रह्मा ने महेन्द्र (इन्द्र) आदि देवों द्वारा ऐसी कोई क्रीड़ा किए जाने पर की जिससे देव, दानव, गन्धर्व, यक्ष, राक्षस, वासुकि, अनन्तादि महासर्पो से समाक्रान्त जम्बूदीप में स्वयमेव प्राणियों में वैदिक क्रियाओं में रुचि उत्पन्न हो जाए। इसके उपाय के रूप में नाट्य की रचना की है, जो दृश्य (हृदयस्पर्शी) और श्रव्य अर्थात् व्युत्पत्तिप्रद अर्थात् देखने-सुनने योग्य है, अभिनवगुप्त ने इसकी व्याख्या की है कि वह दृश्य व श्रव्य अमंगल व कठोर शब्द नहीं है। अतः नाट्य मनुष्य लोक का उपकारक है।'

भरत ने नाट्य के प्रभाव व प्रयोजन को बताते हुए उसे हितोपदेशक बताया है-हितोपदेशजननं ।

धर्म्यं यशस्यमायुष्यं हितं बुद्धिविवर्धनम्।
लोकोपदेशजननं नाट्यमेतद्भविष्यति।।1.116।।

और यह कि नाट्य धर्मप्रद, यशप्रद, आयुवर्द्धक, हितकारी तथा बुद्धिवर्धक है, इसीलिए लोकोपदेशक है।

वह कैसे हित करता है इसके बारे में अभिनवगुप्त बताते हैं कि वह सीधे गुरु की तरह उपदेश नहीं देता पर बुद्धि को बढ़ाता है और प्रतिभा को वैसा ही कर देता है, और क्योंकि प्रतिभा दुष्ट नहीं होती, अतः नाट्य हितोपदेश हैः

'ननु किं गुरुवदुपदेशं करोति नेत्याह। किन्तु बुद्धिं विवर्धयति। स्वप्रतिभामेव तादृशीं वितरतीत्यर्थः। न च सा दुष्टा प्रतिभेत्याह हितमहितप्रतिभाजनकत्वात्। अत्रा हेतुमाह यतो धर्मादनपेतम्।'- अभिनवभारती

भारतीय कलाओं के व्यापक अंतः संबंधों एवं नाट्यकला के सर्वव्यापी एवं सर्वग्राही गुणों को ध्यान में रखते हुए ही भरतमुनि ने नाट्यवेद को अखिल ब्रह्मांड का दर्पण बताया है जिसमें विश्व का प्रत्येक ज्ञान, शिल्प, विद्या, कला, योग व कर्म समाहित हैं। नाट्य सभी द्वीपों के निवासियों, प्राणियों तथा देवतादि के कार्यों एवं चरितों का वृतान्तदर्शक है तथा सुख-दुख से समन्वित लोक के स्वभाव का आंगिक आदि चतुर्विध अभिनयों के द्वारा अनुकरण व प्रदर्शन है।

देवानामसुराणां च राज्ञामथ कुटुम्बिनाम्।
ब्रहमर्षीणां च विज्ञेयं नाट्यं वृतान्तदर्शकम्।।
योऽयं स्वभावो लोकस्य सुखदुखसमन्वित।
सोऽङ्गाद्यभिनयोपेतो नाट्यमित्यभिधीयत।।

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भरताचार्य ने नाट्य में कई अनुशासनों और तत्वों के अन्तरावलम्बन को स्वीकार किया, जो नाट्य की जटिल और संश्लिष्ट सत्ता की स्वीकृति है।

अभिनवगुप्त ने नाट्य को "रसस्वभाव वस्तु" तथा धनंजय ने काव्य-निबद्ध पात्रों की अवस्थाओं का अनुकरण कहा है- अवस्थानुकृतिर्नाट्यम्। अभिनवगुप्त ने एक अन्य स्थल पर नाट्य को नर्तन तथा "नटों के आम्नाय", शासन, धर्म, जीविका तथा पाणिनि ने "नटों के धर्म" को नाट्य कहा है। नाट्य देखने की वस्तु है। अतः नाट्य को दृश्यकाव्य भी कहा जाता है, अर्थात् ऐसी काव्य रचना जिसका न केवल पठन व श्रवण किया जा सके वरन्, उसका मंच पर प्रस्तुतीकरण भी हो सके और वह प्रेक्ष्य हो।

भरत सहित सभी शास्त्रकारों के मत में नाट्य का सर्वोपरि उद्देश्य मंच प्रस्तुति के द्वारा रसिकों से एकात्म्य स्थापित करते हुए उनके हृदयों में रसोद्रेक करना अथवा रस-सृष्टि करना है। इसके लिए भरत मुनि ने एक ओर वय, वेष, गति और पाठ्य के तारतम्य को महत्व दिया है और दूसरी ओर रसनिष्पत्ति का कार्य करने वाले समस्त सिद्धान्तों तथा अंगों का प्रतिपादन नाट्य के 11 तत्वों के रूप में किया-रस, भाव, अभिनय, धर्मी, वृत्ति, प्रवृत्ति, सिद्धि, स्वर, आतोद्य, गान तथा रंग। इनमें रस तथा भाव नाट्य के साध्य हैं, अंग साधन नहीं। प्रवृत्ति वृत्ति से संबंधित है तथा देश की भौगोलिक स्थिति के अनुरूप विभिन्न क्षेत्रों के प्रेक्षकों की रुचि अनुसार पृथक् अथवा मिश्रित वृत्ति प्रयोग हैं। सिद्धि नाट्य प्रस्तुति के द्वारा दर्शक पर पड़ने वाला प्रभाव है। ये दो प्रकार की हैं- दैवी तथा मानुषी। स्वर का गान में अन्तर्भाव हो जाता है तथा ये षड़जादि सात हैं। पांच तत्व-अभिनय, धर्मी, वृत्ति, गीत तथा आतोद्य ही नाट्य के मुख्य तत्व हैं। अभिनवगुप्त ने इन पांचों को ही नाट्य बताया है, *'अभिनयत्रायं गीतातोद्ये चेति पंचांग नाट्यम।"* अभिनवभारती के अनुसार अन्तिम तत्व रंग का संबंध रंगमंच से है। ये तीन प्रकार के होते हैं- चतुरस्र, विकृष्ट तथा मिश्र।

अभिव्यक्ति जिससे की जाती है या जिसके प्रयोग द्वारा अनेक अर्थों को सामाजिकों के अभिमुख पहुंचाया जाता है वह अभिनय हैं। संक्षेप में नाट्यार्थ को प्रदर्शित करने का रचनात्मक उद्योग अभिनय है। यही वह तत्व है जिसके द्वारा काव्य नाट्य होकर

रस की ओर गतिशील होकर अंत में रस की सिद्धि सम्पन्न करता है। अतः अभिनय को "भावाभिव्यक्ति की कला" कहा जा सकता है। उसे अभिव्यक्त करने वाले अभिनेता / नट / नर्तक हैं और अभिव्यक्त करने योग्य वस्तु अथवा अर्थ अभिनेय है। यही कारण है कि अभिनय को नाट्य का पर्याय माना जाता है।

नाट्यशास्त्र सहित *अभिनयदर्पण* आदि सभी ग्रन्थों में चार प्रकार का अभिनय बताया गया है –आंगिक, वाचिक, आहार्य एवं सात्विक। इनमें क्रमशः अंग, उपांग व प्रत्यंग द्वारा वाणी द्वारा, वेषभूषा, अलंकरण व मंचसज्जा द्वारा तथा सहज मनोगत भावों के प्रदर्शन द्वारा काव्यार्थ की अभिव्यंजना की जाती हैः

आंगिकोअंगैर्निदर्शितः। वाचा विरचितः काव्यनाटकादि तु वाचिकः। आहार्यो हारकेयूर वेषादिभिरलंकृतिः सात्तिवकः सात्त्विकैर्भावैर्भावज्ञेन विभावितः।।

(अभिनयदर्पण 39–40)



अभिनय को किस प्रकार से किया जाए यह बताने वाली इतिकर्तव्यता धर्मी कही गई है।[20] (modes of presentation) अर्थात् वह रचना पद्धति जिसके द्वारा यह पता चलता है कि नाट्य के धर्म के अनुरूप कि इस प्रकार से अभिव्यक्ति की जाए। ये दो प्रकार की हैं–लोकधर्मी सहज, स्वाभाविक (informal) और नाट्यधर्मी सप्रयास की गई (formal)। नृत्त व नृत्य में आंगिक अभिनय तथा नाट्यधर्मी का प्रयोग अधिक है। वृत्ति नाट्य की भावधारा के अनुरूप रचना प्रणाली या शैली है जो चार प्रकार की है, भारती, आरभटी, कैशिकी तथा सात्तवती। गान का अर्थ काव्य से है और ये पांच हैं। आतोद्य का संबंध चार प्रकार के वाद्यों–तत, अवनद्ध, घन एवं सुषिर से है।

उपर्युक्त विवेचन से स्पष्ट है कि नाट्य के मूल तत्व अभिनय, गीत एवं वाद्य ही है। इस प्रकार प्राचीन भारतीय नाट्य मुख्यतः तीन कलाओं का समन्वय है अभिनयकला, गायनकला तथा वादनकला। इनमें भी अभिनय नाट्य प्रयोग का मुख्य उपकरण तथा सम्पन्नकर्ता होने के कारण नाट्य का सर्वाधिक महत्वपूर्ण अंग है। गीत एवं वाद्य महत्वपूर्ण होते हुए भी अभिव्यक्ति को अधिक बोधगम्य बनाने हेतु, अभिनय के सहायक तथा नाट्य के सौन्दर्यवर्धक का कार्य करते हैं। अतः अभिनय को ही नाट्य कहा जा सकता है। किन्तु, यह अभिनय वर्तमान अर्थों में एक्टिंग शब्द से होने वाले अर्थबोध से नितांत भिन्न तथा अपने स्वरूप में उससे कहीं अधिक व्यापक था।

एक्टिंग उसका केवल एक अंग है। प्राचीन नाट्य को "दृश्य काव्य" कहने से ही नाट्य की गीतात्मक अथवा काव्यात्मक प्रकृति का बोध होता है। चतुर्विध अभिनय में आंगिक अभिनय के अन्तर्गत अंग–प्रत्यंगों के गत्यात्मक संचालनों के निरूपण से पता चलता है कि न केवल नाट्य गीतात्मक थे वरन् वे लयात्मक तथा नृत्तात्मक भी थे। नाट्य के विभिन्न प्रसंगों में नृत्त हस्त, चारी, मण्डल आदि के रूप में आंगिक अभिनय के प्रयोग को देखते हुए यह सिद्ध होता है कि प्राचीन भारतीय नाट्य नाचे जाते थे।

सोमेश्वर ने स्पष्टतः कहा है कि चतुर्विध अभिनय तथा नृत्य के द्वारा रस की व्यंजना करने वाला नाट्य है "आहार्यैर्वाचिकैश्चैव सात्त्विकैशङ्गिकै रसाः व्यज्यन्तेअभिनयैर्नृत्यैस्तन्नाटयमिति कथ्यते"।[5] इसीलिए अभिनवगुप्त ने व्यवहारिक प्रयोग की दृष्टि से नाट्य व नृत्त को एक दूसरे से भिन्न नहीं माना था "न तावद्भिन्नम् अङ्गविक्षेप नृत्तगीतवत्वेनावैलक्षण्यात् को भेदो नृत्तनाट्यगतः"। इसी दृष्टि से नाट्यशास्त्र के अंग्रेजी अनुवादक डॉ. मनमोहन घोष ने प्राचीन भारतीय नाट्य को वर्तमान नाटक, गीतिनाट्य व नृत्य नाटक (ballet) का सुन्दर समन्वय मानकर गीतात्मक नाट्य–दृश्य (lyrico-dramatic spectacle) कहा है। अतः भरत प्रणीत नाट्य वर्तमान अर्थों में केवल आधुनिक नाटक नहीं था, वह कम से कम चार अतिशय उन्नत ललित कलाओं–नाटक, नृत्य, गायन वादन–का मिश्रित रूप था, जिसकी आंगिक चेष्टाएं नृत्य के सन्निकट होती थीं। अपने विकास के प्रारंभिक चरण में ही प्राचीन भारत में दोनों कलाएं–नाटक व नृत्त (drama and dance) नाट्य के रूप में एक दूसरे में समन्वित हो चुके थे।

समन्वय की यह प्रक्रिया नाट्यशास्त्र की रचना से पहले ही पूर्ण हो चुकी थी।

नृत्यकला की तकनीक आंगिक अभिनय के रूप में नाट्यकला में सन्निहित थी। भरत–प्रणीत नाट्य में से आंगिक अभिनय (अंग–हस्त, कटि, ऊरु, पाद ग्रीवा, स्कन्ध तथा उपांग नेत्र, ओष्ठ) आदि के संचालन के रूप में सावधानीपूर्वक अलग करके नृत्यकला का एक स्वतंत्र शास्त्रीय विधा के रूप में अध्ययन किया जा सकता है, जो परवर्ती शास्त्राकारों ने किया भी। नाट्यशास्त्रीय तथा संगीतशास्त्रीय परम्परा के ग्रन्थों में भरत प्रणीत आंगिक–अभिनय का ही विवेचन नृत्यकला को समर्पित नृत्य – अध्यायों में किया गया है। शारंगदेव[33] ने स्पष्टतः आंगिक द्वारा की गई भावाभिव्यक्ति को नृत्य तथा भावरहित अंग संचालन को नृत्त कहा है।[6]



परवर्ती काल में जब संगीतकला व नाट्यकला का पृथक्–पृथक् विकास हुआ तो नृत्यकला एक ओर आंगिक के रूप में नाट्य का अभिन्न अंग बनी रही, 'तौर्यत्रिक नृत्यं गीतं वाद्यं नाट्यं इदंत्रयम्', और दूसरी ओर वह संगीत के अविभाज्य अंग के रूप में विकसित हुई– 'गीतं वाद्यं तथा नृत्यं त्रयं संगीतमुच्यते'।

नृत्यकला में वाचिक अभिनय को छोड़कर सात्विक तथा 'आहार्य' अभिनय का उपयोग नाट्य के समान ही होता है। अभिनवगुप्त ने तो किसी–किसी प्रसंग में वाचिक का प्रयोग भी बताया है– 'वाचिकोऽप्यभिनय आसनीपाठ्यादौ क्वचिदस्त्येव, तथा 'अहो गाणगाणवल्लिभाण'–इत्यादौ'। नृत्त के विभिन्न प्रकारों में आहार्य अभिनय तो प्रधान रूप से एक ही है– 'सात्विकोऽप्यंगीकृत एक कोहलाद्यैः' तथा आंगिक तो स्पष्ट है ही –'आंगिकस्तु स्फुट एव'। वृत्तियों में नृत्य के लिए सर्वाधिक उपयोगी कैशिकी वृत्ति है। करुण रस व श्रृंगार रसप्रधान दृश्यों में, लास्य नृत्यों में इसी का प्रयोग होता है।

नाट्य, नृत्य व नृत्त

भरतोत्तर काल में आचार्यों ने नाट्यकला व नृत्यकला का स्वतंत्र विधा के रूप में निरूपण करते हुए भरत–प्रणीत नाट्य को तीन वर्गों में विभक्त किया–नाट्य, नृत्य व नृत्त। इनमें नाट्य की तुलना नाटक से की जा सकती है तथा शेष दो का सम्बंध गात्रविक्षेपरूपी नृत्यकला से इससे जगत में अनेक प्रकार की भ्रान्तियाँ हुईं, जो नाट्याचार्यों में आज भी व्याप्त हैं। नृत्य व नृत्त दोनों ही शब्दों का उल्लेख वैदिक काल से ही साहित्य में मिलता है। किन्तु धनंजय ने भरत–प्रणीत दशरूपकों का विवेचन करते समय सर्वप्रथम नृत्त से नृत्य का और नृत्य से नाट्य का पार्थक्य स्थापित किया, जिसके अनुसार नाट्य, नृत्य व नृत्त क्रमशः रसाश्रित, भावाश्रित तथाताललयाश्रित होने के कारण एक–दूसरे से भिन्न हैं–'*रूपकं...दशधैव रसाश्रयं... 'अन्यद्भावाश्रयं नृत्यं, नृत्तं ताललयाश्रयं*।'[7] दशरूपक के टीकाकार धनिक ने लक्षण, अभिनय विशेष की प्रधानता तथा प्रयोजन की विभिन्नता के आधार पर तीनों के अन्तर को अधिक विस्तार से स्पष्ट किया। नाट्य चतुर्विध अभिनय से युक्त लोक की विभिन्न अवस्थाओं का अनुकरण है। जिसमें 'आंगिक' की अपेक्षा सात्विक अभिनय का बाहुल्य है और वाक्यार्थ अभिनय के द्वारा रस की उद्भावना की जाती है–'*किंचिच्चलनार्थत्वात् सात्तिवकबाहुल्यम्... वाक्यार्थभिनयात्मकत्वं रसाश्रयमित्यनेन दर्शितम्*'–धनिक। नृत्य में 'आंगिक' की प्रमुखता है, किन्तु गान के आश्रय से पदार्थाभिनय के द्वारा भावानुकरण भी है--'पदार्थाभिनयात्मकमन्यदेव नृत्यमिति'– धनिक। नृत्त में नृत्य के समान अंग विक्षेप की प्रधानता होते हुए भी अभिनय–शून्य होने के कारण वह ताल और लय का आश्रित है अर्थात् ताल व लय के अनुरूप आंगिक अभिनय का प्रयोग किया जाता है–'*अंगविक्षेपोऽभिनयशून्यो नृत्तमिति*'–धनिक। नृत्त व नृत्य को एक प्रकार से नाट्य की प्रारम्भिक भूमिकाएँ कहा जा सकता है। नृत्य व नृत्त दोनों नाटक के उपकारक हैं, जिनका प्रसंगानुसार उपयोग नाटक में किया जाता है। नृत्य अवान्तर/गौण पदार्थों के अभिनय द्वारा मुख्य कथानक की

अभिव्यक्ति को विस्तार देकर अधिक बोधगम्य बनाने में सहायक होता है। धनिक के अनुसार नृत्त नाट्य की शोभा में अभिवृद्धि करता है–*प्रसंगोस्तस्योपयोगं दर्शयति....नृत्यस्य क्वचिदवान्तर पदार्थाभिनेयनृत्तस्य च शोभाहेतुत्वेन नाटकादावुपयोग इति*। नाट्य व नृत्त की भिन्नताओं को लक्ष्य करते हुए धनिक ने इनको अभिनीत करने वालों में भी भेद करते हुए, नाट्य करने वाले को नट तथा नृत्य करने वाले को नर्तक कहा है। नाट्यशास्त्र में न तो नृत्य शब्द का प्रयोग हुआ है और न ही नाट्यकला का नाट्य, नृत्य व नृत्त में त्रिविध वर्गीकरण प्राप्त होता है, तथापि उसके सूक्ष्म अनुशीलन से स्पष्ट होता है कि धनंजय की अवधारणा के अस्फुट संकेत *नाट्यशास्त्र* में पर्याप्त रूप से विद्यमान थे। भरत प्रणीत नाट्यकला में नृत्यकला के दोनों पक्ष–भावाश्रित तथा भावरहित अंगविक्षेप–क्रमशः आंगिक अभिनय तथा करण, अंगहारों से युक्त नृत्त के रूप में समाविष्ट थे।

नृत्यकला का अभिनेय/भावाश्रित (representational) पक्ष ब्रह्मा द्वारा सृष्ट नाट्यकला में आंगिक अभिनय के रूप में पहले ही से निहित था तथा 'करणों व अंगहारों से निर्मित शुद्ध नृत्त' अथवा अनभिनेय/भावरहित (non–representational) पक्ष का समावेश नाट्यकला में शिव के निर्देश पर बाद में किया गया। इसलिए न यह गीत के अर्थों से संबंद्ध है, न यह स्वरूप तालादि से, इसलिए। किसी अर्थ की अपेक्षा के लिए यह नृत्त नहीं बनाया है।[8] ऋषियों के द्वारा अभिनय–प्रधान नाट्य में अभिनयरहित नृत्त के प्रयोग का औचित्य पूछने पर भरत मुनि ने नृत्त को 'शोभा का जनक' बताया जिसमें अभिनय, गायन तथा वादन की न्यूनताएँ छिप जाती है।[9]

प्रायेण सर्वलोकस्य नृत्तमिष्टं स्वभावतः।
मंगल्यमिति कृत्वा च नृत्तमेतत्प्रकीर्तितम्।।

नाट्यशास्त्र, 4.269।।

इसीलिए नाट्य में नृत्त का प्रयोग किया गया। इसकी विस्तृत व्याख्या व विश्लेषण करते हुए अभिनवगुप्त ने एक ओर नाट्य से नृत्त की अभिन्नता प्रदर्शित की है दूसरी ओर विलक्षणता। वे कहते हैं कि यदि नृत्त को नाट्य से भिन्न मान लिया जाए, तो नृत्त का स्वभाव, धर्म तथा लक्षण या स्वरूप जब आंगिक अभिनय ही है और आंगिक अभिनय नाट्य जो अभिनय स्वभाव है, साथ ही चार अभिनयों में एक आंगिक अभिनय भी है, और नृत्त भी अंगों का विक्षेप है तो उसे नाट्य न कहकर नृत्त क्यों कहा। नृत्त नाट्य क्यों नहीं है, तब नाट्य व नृत्त में क्या भेद है या भेदक स्वभाव या लक्षण क्या है? कि और ऐसा नहीं है, इसिलिए नृत्त भिन्न स्वभाव वाला नहीं है।

नाट्यं च कस्मान्न नृत्तम्। गात्रविक्षेपात्मकं हितदपि तुल्ये च तथाऽर्थे कं भेदकं स्वभावमपेक्षेते।नास्त्यसौ भिन्नस्वभाव इति भावत्। तस्मात्स्वभावस्य प्रयोजनस्य चाभेदान्नृतं नाट्यादभिन्नमिति।

प्रत्यक्षतः भरत ने न तो नृत्त को अभिनेय तथा अनभिनेय प्रकारों में वर्गीकृत किया है और न ही उन्हें कोई नाम दिया है। नृत्य एवं नृ नृत्त को भी अलग व्याख्या नाट्यशास्त्र में नहीं है। नृत्य शब्द का केवल एक बार प्रयोग हुआ है जब महेश्वर ब्रह्मा से उनका नाट्य देखने के बाद कहते हैं 'तुमने यह नाट्य व पूर्वरंग अच्छा किया', यह शुद्ध है। मनोरंजन हेतु इसमें यहां पर नृत्य का भी उपयोग करना चाहिए:

अहो नाट्यमिदं समयकृत्वया सृष्टं महायते मयापीदं स्मृति नृत्यं संध्याकालेषु नृत्यता नानाकरण समुंकैतश्च, हारैविभूषिताम्।

नाट्यशास्त्र 4.12.13

समानता के अनेक स्तर होने के कारण अभिनवगुप्त ने कई स्थलों पर नाट्य व नृत्त को अभिन्न बताया है। नाट्य में गीत और नृत्त दोनों अंगों की प्रतिष्ठा है और नाट्य व नृत्त दोनों में ही आंगिक अभिनय अर्थात् गात्रविक्षेप होता है– अंग तथा गीत का आश्रय लिया जाता है अतः दोनों विलक्षण नहीं हैं। 'विक्षेपनृत्तगीतवत्तवेनावैलक्षण्यात्'। साथ ही जैसा कि अभिनवभारती के टीकाकार वार्तिककार ने कहा है, नाट्य में वाचिक के द्वारा काव्यार्थ का अभिनय किया जाता है और नृत्त में गात्र विक्षेप के द्वारा प्रतिपाद्य वस्तु अर्थात अभिनेय काव्यार्थ दिखाई जाती है :

वाच्यानुगतेऽभिनये प्रतिपाद्येऽर्थेऽपि गात्रविक्षेपैः।
उभयोरपि हि समाने को भेदो नृत्तनाट्यगतः।

वार्तिककार, अभिनवभारती, पृ. 410

अतः नृत्त के द्वारा भी वस्तु की साक्षात् बुद्धि भावाभिव्यक्ति संभव है– *साक्षाद्बुद्धयभावान्न नाट्यमिति तदसत् इयं प्रियतमगुणाकीर्तनपरा नृत्यति...इति बुद्धेः संभवात्–अभिनवभारती*। अभिनयदर्पण में तो नृत्य को रस भाव के साथ–साथ रस का व्यंजक भी बताया है–'रस भाव–व्यंजनादि युक्तं नृत्यमिति'–अतः सिद्ध है कि नृत्त, नाट्य से भिन्न स्वभाव वाला नहीं है–'नास्त्यसौ भिन्न स्वभावः'।

किन्तु अन्य स्थल पर अभिनवगुप्त ने नृत्त को नाट्य से भिन्न बताया है क्योंकि वह साक्षात्कार की योग्यता को प्राप्त नहीं करता। दूसरे शब्दों में नृत्त किसी अभिनय की अपेक्षा नहीं रखता है– 'न खल्वर्थं कंचिन्नृत्तमपेक्षते'। नृत्त में 'नाट्य' वस्तु अभिनय की अपेक्षा नहीं है किन्तु वह शोभा का जनक है। अतः जब नृत्त नाट्य का अंग है तो वहाँ अभिनय की अपेक्षा है। इसी प्रकार अन्यत्र कहते हैं कि नृत्य व अभिनय अलग–अलग दो प्रदार्थ है:

नृत्तेऽभनयोगे च पानिभिवर्तमाश्रमैः मुखभ्रूनेत्रायुक्तानि करणानि प्रयोजयेत्।। ना.शा.।।

अभिनवगुप्त की व्याख्या को निश्चय ही भरत का मत मानकर चला जा सकता है क्योंकि उन्होंने अधिकांशतः भरत द्वारा प्रतिपादित मूलभूत सिद्धान्तों को ही बिना परिवर्तन के व्याख्यायित किया है। वस्तुतः नाट्यशास्त्र में नृत्त व नाट्य में तथा प्रकारान्तर से नृत्त व नृत्य में भेद केवल प्रयोग की दृष्टि से है। नाट्य में भावाभिव्यक्ति हेतु अंगों के अनुरूप लय और ताल का प्रयोग होता है– मनु च नाट्य एवाङ्गानुसारित्वेनलयादिः। न तु नृत्त एव। जबकि नृत्त में लय और ताल के अनुरूप आंगिक अभिनय होता है–

तदर्थयमानरूपकगतगीतवाद्यानुसारित्वात्तन्नृत्तस्य–अभिनव भारती

अतः नाट्य में योग्यता के अनुसार अंगामिभाव होता है जैसे दक्ष के यज्ञ–विध्वंस के पश्चात गणों द्वारा पटह, भेरी व मृदंग आदि के वादन के अनुरूप शिव ने करण व अंगहारों से युक्त नृत्त किया था (*प्रानृत्यल्लयतालवशा (स्वरा) नुगैः*) अतः उसमें वाद्यादि की प्रवृत्ति ही प्रधान थी। इसी दृष्टि से उपयुक्त 'करण व अंगहारों'–जो मूलतः आंगिक अभिनय ही हैं–का प्रयोग भी आवश्यकतानुसार भावाभिव्यक्ति हेतु किया जा सकता था।

अभिनवगुप्त की व्याख्या को निश्चय ही भरत का मत मानकर चला जा सकता है क्योंकि उन्होंने अधिकांशतः भरत द्वारा प्रतिपादित मूलभूत सिद्धान्तों को ही बिना परिवर्तन के व्याख्यायित किया है। वस्तुतः नाट्यशास्त्र में नृत्त व नाट्य में तथा प्रकारान्तर से नृत्त व नृत्य में भेद केवल प्रयोग की दृष्टि से है।

जहाँ नर्तकी ऐसे मनोरंजनप्रधान नृत्य दिखाकर नृत्त की प्रधानता व गीत को उसका अंग बना देती है, अभिनय की परवाह नहीं करती है, तब नृत्त को नाट्य रूप नहीं माना जा सकता। नाट्यभूत अभिनय का यहाँ अभाव है तो नृत्त व नाट्य में प्रयोजन का भेद है इसलिये फलभेद भी है। यही अन्तर नृत्त को नाट्य से अभिन्न होते हुए भी भिन्न करता है।

नाट्यशास्त्र में नृत्त का जो रूप निरूपित हुआ है उससे स्पष्ट है कि नृत्य की नृत्त से स्वतंत्र सत्ता परवर्ती काल में अभिनवगुप्त द्वारा भी, जिसका अनुसरण परवर्ती रचनाकारों ने किया, स्वीकृत की गई। सिद्धान्ततः दोनों का पार्थक्य स्वीकार नहीं किया गया था, तथापि बीज रूप में दोनों की अवधारणा विद्यमान थी। आंगिक अभिनय के प्रस्तुतिकरण की तीन वस्तुओं–शाखा, अंकुर व नृत्त में शाखा अथवा आंगिक अभिनय व नृत्त के पृथक्–पृथक् उल्लेख से भी इस तथ्य की पुष्टि होती है कि भरत नृत्त के उक्त दोनों स्वरूपों में भेद करते थे।

ताण्डव तथा लास्य

नृत्त व नृत्य के भेद समान परवर्ती भरत काल में नर्तन के दो भेद उनके स्वरूप व प्रकृति अर्थात् वृत्ति की दृष्टि से भी नाट्याचार्यों ने कर दिए। इससे भी भ्रामक स्थिति उत्पन्न हुई। वीर रसप्रधान नृत्त–प्रयोग को ताण्डव तथा कोमल, श्रृंगार रस प्रधान नृत्त को लास्य कहा गया है। किन्तु जनसामान्य में ही नहीं विद्वतवर्ग में भी ताण्डव व लास्य के वास्तविक स्वरूप को लेकर व्यापक रूप से भ्रामक अवधारणाएं प्रचलित हैं। कुछ विद्वानों के मतानुसार ताण्डव व लास्य क्रमशः केवल पुरुषों व स्त्रियों के नृत्य हैं। अन्य के विचार से ताण्डव शिव का संहार नृत्य है। इस भ्रम का निवारण भी अभिनवगुप्त ही करते हैं।

भरतमुनि ने नाट्यशास्त्र[10] में वीर–रस–प्रधान, ओजपूर्ण एवं उग्र भावों से युक्त नृत्त प्रयोग को उद्धत अथवा असुकुमार, तथा श्रृंगार रस–प्रधान एवं कोमल हाव–भाव वाले नृत्त प्रयोग को सुकुमार कहा जिनका प्रयोग शिव व पार्वती द्वारा किया गया था। अभिनवगुत्त स्पष्टतः कहते हैं–'द्वयोः प्रयोक्तया सुकुमारासुकुमारनृत्तयोः समकालप्रयोगेण'।[11] शिव को रेचक अंगहार युक्त, नृत्य करते हुए देख पार्वती भी उसी को सुकुमार प्रयोग से नृत्य करने लगीं।

रेचकैरंगहारैश्च नृत्यन्तं वीक्ष्य शंकरम्। सुकुमारप्रयोगेण नृत्यति स्म च पार्वती।। नाट्यशास्त्र,4.256।।

किन्तु, इनका ताण्डव व लास्य नामकरण नाट्यशास्त्र में प्राप्त नहीं होता विष्णुधर्मोत्तरपुराण[11] में नृत्त के "ताण्डव" व लास्य नामक दो प्रकार उद्धत व सुकुमार प्रयोग के लिए ही प्रयुक्त हुए हैं। तण्डु व ताण्डव शब्द की व्याख्या करते हुए अभिनवगुप्त कहते हैं कि जब पितामह ब्रह्मा ने सुरोत्तम महेश्वर से समावकार को देखने के लिए कहा तब महेश्वर ने नाट्य देखने के बाद, ब्रह्मा से उसमें करण व अंगहारों से विभूषित नृत्त समावेश करने को कहा।[11] और तण्डु को, देवताओं को बुला कर नृत्त का प्रयोग करन को कहा– *तण्डु समाहूयेति*। अर्थात नत्त तण्डु से मुनि को प्राप्त हुआ, इसलिए तण्डु से प्राप्त शास्त्र ताण्डव कहलाता है। इस तरह ताण्डव शब्द की व्युत्पत्ति के आधार पर ग्रन्थ के सभी पाठों में तण्डु शब्द का ही प्रयोग किया है तथा तण्डु व 'मुनि' क्रमशः नन्दी व भरत के पर्याय हैं।

सर्वत्र पाठे तण्डु शब्द एव युक्त ताण्डवशब्दव्युत्पत्तिवशात्। तण्डुमुनिशब्दो नन्दि भरतयोरपरनामनी।।

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कोहल, दत्तिल जो भरत के पुत्र थे, से लेकर भट्ट उद्भट,

भट्ट तण्डु का तथा अपने गुरु भट्टतौत का उल्लेख अभिनवगुप्त ही करते हैं। सर्वाधिक महत्वपूर्ण यह है कि अभिनवगुप्ताचार्य ने स्वतंत्र नाट्यशास्त्रीय ग्रन्थ अथवा संगीतशास्त्र की रचना न करके भरतमुनि के बाद लिखे गए ग्रन्थों के उद्धृत तथा लोक में नृत्य संबंधी परिवर्तनों को भी अन्य भेद कहकर *नाट्यशास्त्र* में ही समाहित कर दिया।

भरतप्रणीत शास्त्रीय नृत्त तकनीक की पुनर्व्याख्या एवं पुनःस्थापना में आचार्य कीर्तिधर का योगदान बहुत है, किन्तु यह अभिनवगुप्त ही थे जिन्होंने सर्वप्रथम आचार्य कीर्तिधर का उल्लेख नाट्यशास्त्र के विद्वान के रूप में किया है। उन्होंने तीन स्थलों पर कीर्तिधर का नाम से उल्लेख किया है। जैसे, '*ऊर्ध्वमण्डली नृत्तहस्त*', '*पार्श्वक्रान्ता चारी*' के जो वैकल्पिक नाम क्रमशः '*चक्रवर्तनिका*'[12] '*पार्ष्णिचंडघाता*'[13] तथा '*अर्धस्वस्तिक करण*'[14] की वैकल्पिक व्याख्याएं अन्य आचार्यों अथवा अन्यों के मतानुरूप कहकर उद्धृत की हैं, उन्हीं को जायसेनापति ने नृत्तरत्नावली[15] में स्पष्टतः आचार्य कीर्तिधर के नाम से उद्धृत किया है । इन उद्धरणों के आधार पर कहा जा सकता है कि अनेक स्थलों पर अन्य नृत्तहस्त एवं करणों के प्रसंग में भी, अभिनवगुप्त द्वारा जो अन्यों के नाम से उद्धृत वैकल्पिक नामों/व्याख्याओं को भी कीर्तिधर का मत मानकर चला जा सकता है, और जिनका उल्लेख सर्वप्रथम अभिनवगुप्त ने ही किया।



ध्वनि सिद्धांत

उस समय जब कि ध्वनिवाद की सब निन्दा करते थे और रसवाद का सम्मान करते थे, पर्ववर्ती शास्त्रकारा उसी समय अभिनवगुप्त का प्रादुर्भाव हुआ जो कि ध्वनिमत के पक्के अनुयायी और रस के समर्थक थे। आनन्दवर्धन द्वारा संस्थापित ध्वनि मत, जिसकी जड़ करीब–करीब हिल चुकी थी, को अभिनवगुप्त ने ऐसा जमाया कि उसके बाद के आलंकारिकों ने सम्मानित किया। उन्होंने ध्वनि विरोधियों की कड़ी आलोचना की और खासकर भट्टनायक और उसके रसानुभूति के तरीकों की अपने *लोचन* और *अभिनवभारती* में उनको व्यर्थ प्रमाणित किया। उसके अनुसार रस–ध्वनि कविता के प्राण हैं. अन्य कविता के अलंकार हैं।

अभिनवभारती में हमें इस मत से सब सामयिक लेखकों के उदाहरण मिलते हैं और गायन कला, नाट्य कला एवं नाटक के सभी विषयों पर अच्छा प्रकाश पड़ता है। भट्टलोल्लट श्रीशंकुक और भट्टनायक आदि के रसानुभूति के सम्बंध में तीन प्रधान विचारों पर, जो भरत के रस सूत्र के आधार पर हैं. उन्होंने अच्छा प्रकाश डाला है। रसानुभूति के मनोविज्ञान के ऊपर उन्होंने भट्टनायक के सिद्धांतों को अनुसंधान करके एक नया मत चलाया जिसको बाद में सब अलंकारिकों ने स्वीकार किया।

ध्वनि मत के समर्थकों ने भरत द्वारा परिचालित रस सिद्धान्त में सबसे बड़ा दोष यह देखा कि उसके अनुसार कविता में "भम धम्मिअ" आदि पद्यों के समावेश के लिए कोई स्थान नहीं। रस भंगी के अनुसार सिर्फ वह ही पद्य या कविता अच्छी कविता समझी जा सकती है जो रसानुभूति को बढ़ाती है न कि वह जहां सिर्फ सुन्दर वस्तु एवं अलंकार दिखाया गया हो।

इस दोष को दूर करने के लिए उन्होंने ध्वनि मत का प्रवर्तन किया जिसमें कि रस को बहुत बड़ा स्थान दिया गया है। शान्त रस के बारे में अभिनव ने सिर्फ यही नहीं प्रमाणित किया कि यह कविता में पुष्ट एवं स्पष्ट हो सकता है, अपितु अन्य रसों में इसको प्रथम स्थान दिया। इस प्रकार के नाट्यशास्त्र के एक अंश शान्त रस पर मूर्धन्य टीका अभिनवगुप्त की ही है।

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यह कहना अतिशयोक्ति न होगी कि नाट्य व नृत्यकला पर लिखने वाले परवर्ती शास्त्रकारों ने अभिनवगुप्त द्वारा व्याख्यायित भरत का उपयोग अधिक किया है। संगीत रत्नाकर के रचयिता शारंगदेव ने तो अभिनवगुप्त का पूर्णतः अनुसरण करते हुए प्रायः अभिनवगुप्त की गद्य व्याख्या को ही पद्यबद्ध कर दिया है। नृत्त रत्नावली, नृत्यरत्नकोश तथा नृत्याध्याय के रचनाकार क्रमशः जय सेनापति, कुम्भकर्ण तथा अशोक मल्ल ने भी लगभग अभिनवगुप्त की धारणाओं व व्याख्याओं को ही अपनी रचना बना डाला।

आचार्य भरत द्वारा प्रवर्तित नाट्य की परम्परा दो रूपों में आगे बढ़ी। उसका एक रूप तो उनके शिष्यों प्रशिष्यों द्वारा विधिवत् अध्ययन – प्रशिक्षण द्वारा प्रशस्त हुआ और दूसरा रूप शैलूषों, कुशीलवों (नट नर्तक गायकों) तथा चारणों द्वारा प्रवर्तित हुआ। नाट्य के इस दूसरे रूप का प्रवर्तन मौखिक रूप से हुआ। इनके प्रतिनिधि शिक्षित नहीं थे, किन्तु इन्होने लोक परम्पराओं, अभिरुचियों और मान्यताओं के अनुरूप निरन्तर अपनी लोकप्रियता को बढ़ाया। प्रथम परम्परा मार्गी एवं द्वितीय परम्परा देशी कहलायी। मार्ग परम्परा पठन–पाठन के द्वारा और दूसरी परम्परा लोकप्रिय कुशीलवों आदि द्वारा मौखिक रूप से निर्वाहित एवं प्रवर्तित होती हुई आगे बढ़ी।

परवर्ती शास्त्रकारों ने दोनों ही प्रकार की परम्पराओं को लेखनीबद्ध किया। आचार्य भरत ने अनेक स्थलों पर स्वयं लोकपरम्पराओं की मान्यताओं को स्वीकार किया है। यही कारण है कि मार्गी परम्परा में भी समय–समय पर परिवर्तन आते गए और विभिन्न व्याख्याओं द्वारा अपने ही दृष्टिकोण से भरत को विवेचित किया गया। इस दृष्टि से सम्बन्धित शास्त्रों का सूक्ष्म विश्लेषण करने पर ज्ञात होता है कि भरतोत्तर संगीत शास्त्रों एवं नाट्य शास्त्रों में से कुछ ऐसे हैं जिनमें नृत्य की केवल मार्गपरम्परा का विवेचन है जैसे *विष्णुधर्मोत्तरपुराण* आदि। कुछ शास्त्रों की विचारणा का मुख्य विषय नृत्य कला का देशी पक्ष रहा है, जैसे मतंग विरचित *बृहद्देशी*, सोमेश्वर विरचित *मानसोल्लास*, तथा पार्श्वदेव विरचित *संगीतसमयसार* आदि। किन्तु कुछ शास्त्र ऐसे हैं जिनमें नृत्य कला का सर्वांगीण प्रतिपादन हुआ है और मार्गी एवं देशी दोनों परम्पराओं को समान दृष्टि से निरूपित किया गया है। ये वे शास्त्र थे जिन्होंने अभिनवगुप्त का शब्दशः अनुसरण किया तथा कुछ और जोड़ा। विषय के निरूपण की दृष्टि से भी इन शास्त्रों का क्षेत्र अत्यंत व्यापक एवं स्वरूप सर्वदेशीय है। इस श्रेणी में *संगीतरत्नाकर, नृत्यरत्नकोश, नृत्तरत्नावली* तथा '*नृत्याध्याय*' मुख्य हैं। केवल यही चारों शास्त्र ऐसे हैं, जिसमें नृत्य कला से सम्बंधित सभी पक्षों का सूक्ष्म विश्लेषण एवं सांगोपांग वर्णन हुआ है और उनका आधार *अभिनवभारती* रहा है।

करण व अंगहार

करणों का प्रयोग कैसे होगा के सन्दर्भ में अभिनवगुप्त व्याख्या करते हैं– *सकरण एवं सरेचक* इति अर्थात् करण व रेचकों का प्रयोग अंगहारों के अंग के रूप में हो सकता है न कि पृथक् रूप में। नत्त करण की परिभाषा करते हुए, भरत कहते हैं 'हस्तपाद समायोगो नृत्तस्य करणं भवेत्'– अर्थात् हस्तपाद आदि से क्रिया ही करण है। तब अभिनवगुप्त पूछते हैं, कस्यक्रिया– अर्थात् किसकी क्रिया? अर्थात् अंगों का विलास के साथ इतस्ततः संचार– 'गात्रास्यं विलासक्षेपस्य'' तब नृत्त का अर्थ है नाचना, जो क्रिया है और करण का अर्थ भी क्रिया है। तो क्रिया को दो शब्दों में क्यों कहा? तब अभिनवगुप्त क्रिया का स्वरूप समझाते हैं– हस्त एवं पाद का समायोग। हस्त का अर्थ यहाँ है पूर्वकाय तथा पाद का अर्थ है अपरकाय अर्थात् शरीर के कमर से ऊपर के अंग व उपांगों तथा कमर के नीचे के अंगों–कटि, ऊरु, जंघा व चरण की संगति के साथ अविकल रूप से संचालन की योजना।

हस्तोपलक्षितस्य पूर्वकायवर्तिशाखांगोपांगादेः पादोपलक्षितस्य चापरकायगतकट्यरूजंघा चरणादेः संगततयाऽत्रुटिततेन वृत्तियोजने।

यह क्रिया सविलास अर्थात् विलास क्रीड़ा से युक्त है, इसीलिए नृत्त शब्द विशेषण है और फलतः यह क्रिया नृत्तकरण है। इसी सन्दर्भ में यह प्रश्न स्वाभाविक ही उठता है कि जब नृत्तकरण हस्त व पाद की सविलास समन्वित क्रीड़ा है तो पहले चतुरश्र आदि नृत्तहस्त तथा स्थानक, चारी व रूस, जंघा, चरण आदि के भेद पहले कहने चाहिए थे, यहाँ पहले ही करण क्यों कहे? इसका समाधान करते हुए अभिवगुप्त कहते हैं कि स्थानक, चारी आदि का ज्ञान नाट्य ज्ञान से ही मुनि को विदित है। अभिनयोपयोगी वर्धमानादि नत्त हस्त भी उन्हें विदित हैं। किन्तु नृत्त बाद में महेश्वर ने जोड़ा। इसीलिए नृत्तकरण पहले कहा। अंगहार की भी अभिनवगुप्त स्पष्ट व्याख्या करते हैं कि महेश्वर या हर (महादेव) ने हाथ व पैरों आदि अंगों से जो अभिनय या प्रयोग किया वह हार (प्रयोग) ही अंगहार है। किन्तु मुनि का आशय गिनती गिनवाने से नहीं है। करण अनन्त है, सामाजिकों की रुचि से केवल 22 अंगहारों का नाम मात्र से संकीर्तन किया, पर यह परिगणन नहीं है। 'इतने ही हैं', यह संख्या बतलाने का आग्रह नहीं है। अंगों का इस देश से उस देश (यहां देश से तात्पर्य है अंग क्षेत्र जैसे वक्ष प्रदेश, शिरो प्रदेश, जंघा प्रदेश, कटि प्रदेश आदि) में पहुँचाने के प्रकार का नाम अंगहार है। और हर अथवा महेश्वर से सम्बन्धी जो प्रयोग है वह हार है।

''दृष्टफलं प्रत्यधिकोपधितया द्वात्रिशंदेतेंगहारा नामतो निर्दिष्टा। न तु परिगणन मेतत्। अंगगवां देशान्तरे प्राणणप्रकारोङ्गहारः। हरस्य चाप हारः प्रयोगः अंर्गनिर्वर्त्यो हारोंगहारः।''

वस्तुतः जहाँ–जहाँ नाट्यशास्त्र को समझने में कठिनाई आती है वहां–वहां, अभिनवगुप्त समाधान लेकर खड़े मिलते हैं। नाट्यशास्त्र की अवधारणाओं में आई उलझनों को सुलझाते दिखते हैं। अस्पष्टता को स्पष्टता में बदलते हुए, भ्रमों को दूर करते हुए नाट्यशास्त्र की मूल भावना को बचा कर, प्रक्षेपणों को अन्य मत स्वीकारते हुए, मत भिन्नता को समाहित करने की प्रक्रिया में आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त ने एक विलक्षण ग्रन्थ की रचना कर दी। इसीलिए वह टीका होते हुए भी मूल रचना जैसा अमूल्य हो गया।

यह शैवाचार्य अभिनवगुप्त की अद्भुत प्रतिभा का ही चमत्कार था कि वे न तो नाट्य के प्रयोक्ता थे, न नृत्यकला के प्रशिक्षक या नृत्याचार्य या स्वयं अभिनेता या नर्तक कलाकार। केवल संस्कृताचार्य, दर्शनशास्त्री व उद्भट विद्वान रहते हुए भी उन्होंने उनकी ऐसी व्याख्या की जैसे इन सभी रूपों में वे स्वयं नाट्य व नृत्य का साक्षात् अनुभव कर रहे थे। न मार्गी परम्परा से उनकी दृष्टि हटी और न ही हजार वर्षों के अन्तराल में हुए परिवर्तन उनकी आँखों से ओझल हुए। पूर्व नृत्याचार्यों, नाट्याचार्यों, धर्माचार्यों व दर्शनशास्त्रियों के विचारों को भी उन्होंने पर्याप्त मान व सम्मान सहित संजोया व समकालीन विद्वानों की अवधारणाओं का भी विश्लेषण करते हुए अपनी टीका में स्थान दिया।

यही कारण है कि भरत का नाट्यशास्त्र आज जिस रूप में उपलब्ध है, उसे संजोने व सहेज कर रखने में और नृत्यकला की दो–ढाई हजार वर्षों से प्रवहमान शास्त्रीय नृत्य परम्परा को जीवित रखने में अभिनवगुप्ताचार्य का महत्त्व नाट्यशास्त्रीय परम्परा के रचनाकारों में भरतमुनि से कम नहीं है।

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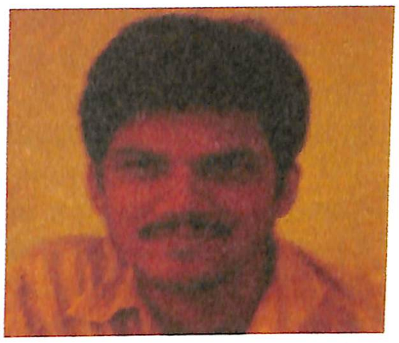
डॉ॰ सुधा मलैया हिंदी पत्रिका 'ओजस्विनी' की संस्थापिका और मुख्य संपादिका हैं। डॉ॰ मलैया राष्ट्रीय महिला आयोग की सदस्या रह चुकी हैं और भरत नाट्यम् की नृत्यांगना भी रही हैं। आजकल वे मध्य प्रदेश के दमोह क्षेत्र में एक व्यावसायिक शिक्षण महाविद्यालय की निदेशिका के रूप में कार्यरत हैं। उन्हे अभिनवभारती पर अपने शोध कार्य के लिए डॉक्ट्रेट की उपाधि भी प्राप्त हुई है।



दर्शन

त्रिक दर्शन में आभास, प्रतिबिम्बन एवं काव्य प्रक्रिया

(अभिनवगुप्त के विशेष सन्दर्भ में)



डॉ॰ योगेश शर्मा

माधवाचार्य (13वीं शताब्दी)[1] के अनुसार भारतीय दार्शनिक चिन्तन को प्रमुखतः सोलह शाखाओं में विभाजित किया गया है। इन शाखाओं में दार्शनिक चिन्तन के प्रमुख विषय प्रमाण, प्रमेय, प्रमाता, प्रमिति पर भिन्न–भिन्न दृष्टिकोणों से विचार किया गया है। भारतीय दर्शन के जितने भी सम्प्रदाय प्रकाश में आते हैं, उनमें अधिकतर प्रमाण व प्रमेय विषयक आधारभूमि का आश्रय लिया गया है। इन्हीं सम्प्रदायों में प्रमातावादी दर्शन 'प्रत्यभिज्ञादर्शन' का नाम आता है। इसे काश्मीर शैव दर्शन एवं त्रिक दर्शन के नाम से भी अभिहित किया जाता है। इस दर्शन का उद्‌गम क्षेत्र कश्मीर होने के कारण इसे काश्मीर शैव दर्शन कहा जाता है। इसी को रहस्य सम्प्रदाय तथा त्र्यम्बक सम्प्रदाय भी कहा गया है। सिद्धा, नामक तथा मालिनी इन तीन आगम–समूह को शिव, शक्ति तथा अणु को, पति पाश और पशु को, शिव शक्ति तथा नर को देवी के परा, अपरा तथा परात्परा इन तीन रूपों को मानने के कारण भेद, अभेद तथा भेदाभेद की व्याख्या के कारण इसे त्रिक कहा जाता है।[2]

भारतीय दर्शन के जितने भी सम्प्रदाय प्रकाश में आते हैं, उनमें अधिकतर प्रमाण व प्रमेय विषयक आधारभूमि का आश्रय लिया गया है। इन्हीं सम्प्रदायों में प्रमातावादी दर्शन 'प्रत्यभिज्ञादर्शन' का नाम आता है। इसे काश्मीर शैव दर्शन एवं त्रिक दर्शन के नाम से भी अभिहित किया जाता है।

यद्यपि त्रिक दर्शन का व्यवस्थित प्रवर्तन कश्मीर में नवीं शताब्दी के प्रारम्भ में हुआ, किन्तु जिन आगमों तथा गुरु परम्पराओं के आधार पर इस दर्शन का विकास हुआ वे इससे काफी प्राचीन हैं, उनका समय निश्चित कर पाना कठिन है। त्रिक दर्शन के आधारभूत शास्त्रों को तीन शाखाओं में विभाजित किया जाता है[3] –

1. आगमशास्त्र 2. स्पन्दशास्त्र 3. प्रत्यभिज्ञाशास्त्र

तन्त्रालोक आह्निक 11, 12, 36 में बताया गया है कि श्री कण्ठनाथ की आज्ञा से त्र्यम्बकादित्य, अमर्दक और श्रीनाथ ने त्रिविध शैवतन्त्रों का प्रवर्तन किया। आह्निक 13, 36 में बताया गया है कि इनका प्रवर्तन अर्द्धत्र्यम्बक की पुत्री ने किया।

उपरोक्त तीन शास्त्रीय शाखाओं को क्रमशः द्वैत, द्वैताद्वैत और अद्वैत भी कहा जाता है। प्रत्यभिज्ञा दर्शन का सम्बन्ध तीसरी अद्वैतवादी शाखा से है। सोमानन्दनाथ ने अपने ग्रन्थ शिवदृष्टि के अन्तिम अध्याय में अद्वैतवादी शाखा का संक्षिप्त परिचय देते हुए स्वयं को त्र्यम्बक का 19वाँ वंशज बताया है।

सोमानन्द ने त्र्यम्बक के परवर्ती/आरम्भिक 14 वंशजों का नाम नहीं दिया है। किन्तु 15वीं शताब्दी से आरम्भ करके वे क्रमानुसार अपनी वंशावली का परिचय देते हैं।

(15) संगमादित्य

(16) वर्षादित्य

(17) अरुणादित्य

(18) आनन्द

(19) सोमानन्द

सोमानन्द नाथ अभिनवगुप्त के प्रपितामह–गुरु थे। अभिनव का समय 950 से 1025 ई. के मध्य हैं। इस आधार पर कहा जा सकता है कि सोमानन्द उनसे एक शताब्दी पूर्व लगभग 850 ई. में रहे होंगे। शिवाद्वयवादी स्पन्द शाखा के प्रमुख आचार्य कल्लट जो अवन्तिवर्मा के शासनकाल में हुये, भट्टेन्दुराज के सम्बन्ध से अभिनवगुप्त के प्रपितामह–गुरु थे। इस आधार पर कहा जा सकता है कि सोमानन्द एवं कल्लट समकालीन थे और दोनों का समय 850 ई. था। लगभग 825–850 ई. तक वसुगुप्त शिवसूत्र की खोज कर चुके थे जो शैवाद्वैत की स्पन्द शाखा का प्रमुख ग्रन्थ है। वसुगुप्त के पुत्र एवं शिष्य कल्लट ने स्पन्दकारिका ग्रन्थ लिखा। उनके समकालीन सोमानन्द ने शिवदृष्टि तथा सोमानन्द के पुत्र एवं शिष्य उत्पलदेव ने लगभग 900 ई. में प्रत्यभिज्ञाकारिका की रचना की।

इस प्रकार काश्मीर शैवाद्वैत की दार्शनिक अवधारणा की स्थापना और विकास नवीं व दसवीं शताब्दी में माना जा सकता है, जिसमें शिवसूत्र प्रथम ग्रन्थ है। शिवसूत्र एवं स्पन्दकारिका अद्वैत शैवदर्शन की स्पन्द शाखा के प्रमुख ग्रन्थ हैं। वहीं शिवदृष्टि, ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञाकारिका, प्रत्यभिज्ञा शाखा के प्रमुख ग्रन्थ हैं, जो क्रमशः सोमानन्दकृत एवं उत्पलदेवकृत हैं। इसी श्रृंखला में महान् दर्शनिक अभिनवगुप्तपदाचार्य का नाम आता है। उत्पलदेव के पुत्र और लक्ष्मणगुप्त ने अभिनवगुप्त को प्रत्यभिज्ञा और क्रम शाखाओं में दीक्षित किया। लक्ष्मणगुप्त के अतिरिक्त अभिनव ने भूतिराज और उनके पुत्र हेलाराज से भी शिक्षा प्राप्त की । जो सम्भवतः क्रमदर्शन के आचार्य थे। अर्द्धत्र्यम्बक सम्प्रदाय द्वारा प्रवर्तित कुलमार्ग में अभिनव के गुरु जालन्धर पीठ के शम्भुनाथ थे।

अभिनवगुप्त एवं उनके ग्रन्थ

अभिनवगुप्त प्रत्यभिज्ञा दर्शन के शीर्षस्थ आचार्य हैं। इनका समय 10वीं शताब्दी उत्तरार्द्ध व 11वीं शताब्दी पूर्वार्द्ध के मध्य माना जाता है।अभिनवगुप्तपादाचार्य ने शैवदर्शन के कई ग्रन्थों का प्रणयन किया। साथ ही साहित्यशास्त्रीय ग्रन्थों की रचना की। इसलिए उनके साहित्यशास्त्रीय ग्रन्थों को शैवाद्वैतवादी दार्शनिक दृष्टि के बिना समझा नहीं जा सकता है और वैसे भी सहित्यशास्त्र प्रत्यभिज्ञा के काफी समीप भी प्रतीत होता है। आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त ने लगभग 40 ग्रन्थों का प्रणयन किया। इनमें कुछ टीका ग्रन्थ हैं, कुछ साहित्यशास्त्रीय (क्रम संख्या 7, 8) और कुछ मौलिक ग्रन्थ हैं–

1. बोधपञ्चदशिका	2.मालिनी–विजय–वार्तिकम्
3. परात्रिंशिका–विवरण	4.तन्त्रालोक
5. तन्त्रसार	6.तन्त्रवटधानिका
7. ध्वन्यालोकलोचन	8.अभिनवभारती
9. भगवद्गीतार्थसंग्रह	10.परमार्थसार
11.ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञाविमर्शिनी	12.ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञाविवृत्तिविमर्शिनी
13. पर्यन्तपंचाशिका	14.घटककर्परकुलक–विवृत्ति
15. अनुत्तराष्टिका	16.परमार्थद्वादशिका
17. परमार्थचर्चा	18.महोपदेशविंशतिकम्
19. क्रमस्तोत्रम्	20.भैरवस्तोत्रम्
21. देहस्थदेवताचक्रस्तोत्रम्	22.अनुभवनिवेदनम्
23. रहस्यपंचदशिका	24.तन्त्रोच्चयय
25. बिम्ब–प्रतिबिम्बवाद	26.अनुत्तरतत्त्वविमर्शिनीवृत्ति
27. पुररवोविचार	28.क्रमकेलि
29. शिवदृष्ट्यालोचनम्	30.पूर्वपञ्चिका
31. पदार्थप्रवेशनिर्णय टीका	32.प्रकीर्णकविवरण
33. काव्यकौतुकविवरण	34.प्रकरण विवरण
35. कथामुखतिलकम्	36.लघ्वी प्रक्रिया
37. भेदवाद–विदारण	38.देवीस्तोत्र–विवरण
39. तत्त्वाध्वप्रकाशिका	40.शिवशक्त्यविनाभावस्तोत्रम्।

अभिनवगुप्तपादाचार्य के द्वारा उपर्युक्त ग्रन्थों में काश्मीर शैव दर्शन एवं काव्यानुभूति के लगभग सभी पक्षों पर विचार किया गया है। इनमें से सृष्टि प्रक्रिया के सिद्धान्त को आभासवाद कहा गया है।

विश्वप्रपञ्च के व्याख्यान हेतु शैवाद्वैत दर्शन में छत्तीस तत्त्वों[4] की कल्पना की गयी है। ये तत्त्व स्वतंत्र नहीं, किन्तु परमशिव का आभास हैं। वस्तुतः यह 'आभास' परमशिव की विश्वमयी इच्छा का स्थूल रूपान्तरण है। यह समस्त विश्व अन्ततः परम शिव का ही स्वरूप है। अभिनवगुप्त सम्पूर्ण जगत् को अनुभवगम्य एवं वास्तविक मानते हैं क्योंकि वह सर्वाभिव्यापक समष्टि चैतन्य अथवा आत्मा की अभिव्यक्ति है। यह अभिव्यक्ति स्वरूपतः वैसी ही है जैसे योगी की सृष्टि उसकी आत्मा की अभिव्यक्ति है, किन्तु यह आत्मा के अनुभव के अतिरिक्त कुछ नहीं है और **इसकी सत्ता आत्मा में ही हैं, ठीक वैसे ही जैसे हमारे भावों की सत्ता हमारे अन्दर ही है।** यही आभासवाद है। आभास क्या है? इसकी व्याख्या में डॉ. पाण्डेय कहते हैं कि–

"यह सब जो दिखलाई देता है, वह सब जो प्रत्यक्ष या चिन्तन का विषय है, वह सब जो हमारी बाह्य इन्द्रियों अथवा अन्तर्मन की पहुँच में आता है, वह सब जिसके विषय में हम उस समय भी सचेत हैं जब हमारी इन्द्रियाँ और मन कार्य करना बन्द कर देते हैं, जैसे समाधि में या गहरी निद्रा में वह सब जिसके विषय में मानव चेतना, सीमित होने के कारण, सामान्यतः अभिज्ञ नहीं हो सकती और जो इस कारण केवल आत्म–साक्षात्कार का ही विषय है। संक्षेप में, जो कुछ भी है अर्थात् जो कुछ भी किसी प्रकार की भाषा का प्रयोग संभव है, चाहे वह प्रमाता हो या प्रमेय, ज्ञान का साधन हो, स्वयं ज्ञान ही, वह सब आभास है।"[5]

आभासवाद के विषय में परमार्थसार में कहा गया है कि "जिस प्रकार विचित्र नगर, ग्राम आदि अविभक्त (अभिन्न) होने पर भी दर्पण बिम्ब में एक–दूसरे से तथा दर्पण से भी भिन्न रूप में भासित होते हैं, उसी प्रकार यह जगत् अत्यन्त निर्मल परम भैरव की संवित् से अभिन्न (विभागशून्य) होने पर भी एक–दूसरे से ताकि उस (परम तत्त्व) से भी भिन्नरूप में भासित होता है।[6] इसी का समर्थन *तन्त्रालोक*[7] **एवं** *प्रत्यभिज्ञाहृदयम्*[8] **भी किया गया है।"** आभासवाद के *अनुसार चरम सत्ता के दो पक्ष हैं–*

1. विश्वोत्तीर्ण – इसे अनुत्तर भी कहा जाता हैं यह अव्यवहार्य और अव्यप्रदेश्य है। कोई भी वस्तु इससे परे नहीं है।[9] यह विचारों का विषय नहीं है, केवल अनुभवगम्य है हमारे विचार उसके अत्यन्त तुच्छ अंश को स्पर्श कर पाते हैं। यह विश्व उसकी एक कला मात्र है, वह इससे परे समस्त है, परन्तु यह समस्त हमारे सीमित अनुभवों से विलक्षण है। उसे हम निषेधात्मक या भावात्मक – किसी भी विशेषण से व्यक्त नहीं कर सकते।[10] परम शिव की यह स्थिति स्वतः सिद्ध है। यह प्रमाणों से भी सिद्ध नहीं हो सकती, क्योंकि यह स्वयं सम्पूर्ण प्रमाणों का आश्रय है–

विश्ववैचित्र्यचित्रस्य समभित्तितलोपमे।
विरुद्धाभावसंस्पर्शे परमार्थसतीश्वरे।।
प्रमातरि पुराणे तु सर्वदा भातविग्रहे।
किं प्रमाणं नवाभासः सर्वप्रमितिभागिनी।।[11]

चरम सत्ता की यह अवस्था मौलिक समरसता आत्म अवस्था होने के कारण द्वैतहीन, द्वन्द्व रहित एक स्वाभाविक अवस्था है यही पूर्णतः स्वरूपविश्रान्ति की अवस्था है। साथ ही विशुद्ध अथवा मलों से रहित प्रकाश की अथवा प्रमाता, प्रमाण और प्रमेय इन तीनों की अविभागमयी प्रमिति की अवस्था होने के कारण उसमें उत्तरत्व का कलंक तनिक भी नहीं है।

विश्वमय – चरम सत्ता का यह पक्ष प्रकाश विमर्शमय है। प्रकाशविमर्शमयता के कारण ही परमशिव 'विश्वमय' स्वरूप है। 'प्रकाश' और 'विमर्श' दोनों परम्पर अवियोग्य रूप में नित्य संयुक्त हैं। 'प्रकाश' शिव तथा 'विमर्श' शक्ति का द्योतक है। परम शिव की विश्वमयी अवस्था ही सम्पूर्ण जगत् की अभिव्यक्ति का कारण है। इसमें प्रकाश पक्ष दर्पण का आधार तत्त्व है और विमर्श पक्ष प्रतिबिम्ब[12] रूप। 'विमर्श' के बिना केवल 'प्रकाश' विचार की सीमा से परे है। यही रूप शिवशक्तिमय है। अभिव्यक्ति का आधार प्रकाश और अभिव्यक्ति की शक्ति विमर्श है। विश्वात्मा अपने आपको आधारभूमि बनाकर उस पर अपने भीतर स्थित विश्व को प्रकट करता है।[13] अभिव्यक्ति विश्व की विश्वात्मा से भिन्न दर्पण व उसके प्रतिबिम्ब जैसी है।

आभासवाद के विषय में परमार्थसार में कहा गया है कि "जिस प्रकार विचित्र नगर, ग्राम आदि अविभक्त (अभिन्न) होने पर भी दर्पण बिम्ब में एक–दूसरे से तथा दर्पण से भी भिन्न रूप में भासित होते हैं, उसी प्रकार यह जगत् अत्यन्त निर्मल परम भैरव की संवित् से अभिन्न (विभागशून्य) होने पर भी एक–दूसरे से ताकि उस (परम तत्त्व) से भी भिन्नरूप में भासित होता है।

निर्मले मुकुरे यद्वत् भान्ति भूमिलतादयः।
अमिश्रास्तद्वदेकस्मिंश्चिन्नाथे विश्ववृत्तयः।।[14]

प्रकाश शिव है तथा विमर्श 'शक्ति' है। शक्ति ही परमशिव का ऐश्वर्य है अन्यथा वह एक स्थाणु मात्र है।[15] प्रत्यभिज्ञा दर्शन में विमर्श को आनन्द की संज्ञा भी दी गयी है। यह विमर्श उपचारतः परमशिव का हृदय है। भट्टनारायण[16] ने *स्तवचिन्तामणि* ग्रन्थ में इसी आनन्द रूप विमर्श को परमशिव का सारभूत (हृदयरूप) बताया है।[17] इसे ही विश्व की बीज शक्ति भी कहा गया है। अतः वह विश्व का भोक्ता कहलाता है।[18] वह अपने प्रकाशविमर्शमय विश्वात्मक रूप में भी अनुत्तर की तरह निर्गुण है।

क्योंकि वह माया प्रकृति आदि के रूप में आभासित होकर भी 'आभासवाद' की अवधारणा के अनुसार अपने पारमार्थिक स्वरूप से च्युत नहीं होता। वह स्वयं तो अनादि और अनन्त है किन्तु समस्त विश्व का आदि और अन्त है।[19] इस विश्व नाटक की प्रस्तावना और उपसंहार करने वाला वही एक मात्र कवि है।

जिस प्रकार सम्पूर्ण विश्व सृष्टि का आभासन परम शिव में ही आभासित होता है एवं वह अपनी विमर्श शक्ति से सम्पूर्ण विश्व का प्रकाशन करता है। इसी प्रकार कवि भी अपनी विमर्शरूपा प्रतिभा शक्ति[20] से सम्पूर्ण काव्य का क्षण भर में ही प्रकाशन करता है। इसी कारण अभिनवगुप्त ने लोचन टीका के प्रथम उद्योत के अन्त में कहा भी है।

यदुन्मीलन शक्त्यैव विश्वमुन्मीलति क्षणात्।
स्वात्मायतन विश्रान्तां वन्दे तां प्रतिभा शिवाम्।।[21]

प्रतिभा को विमर्श, हृदय, शिव एवं शक्ति के पर्याय के रूप में देखा गया है। प्रतिभा का सम्बन्ध सृजनात्मकता से है। जो परमशिव एवं कवि दोनों के स्तर पर सृजनात्मकता का आधार बनती है। इसी कार्य का हेतु होने से इसकी परिभाषा में अभिनव द्वारा इसे "अपूर्ण निर्माणक्षमा प्रज्ञा[22] कहा गया है। प्रतिभा विश्व एवं काव्य दोनों स्थितियों में अपूर्व का निर्माण करती है।

इस प्रकार कवि एवं शिव के स्तर पर प्रतिभा सूक्ष्म से स्थूल की उन्मेष प्रक्रिया का आभासन करती है। वही प्रतिभा काव्य–ग्राहक एवं साधक के स्तर पर स्थूल से सूक्ष्म की उन्मेष प्रक्रिया का प्रकाशन करती है।

प्रतिभा के द्वारा ही प्रमाता (काव्य–ग्राहक) सहृदय अर्थ का सृजन करता है अर्थात् वर्णनीय को समझता हुआ उससे तादात्म्य स्थापित कर रसानुभूतिमय विश्रान्ति को प्राप्त करता है। ठीक उसी प्रकार जिस प्रकार शैवाद्वैत दर्शन में प्रमाता पहले अर्थ का सृजन करता है, उसमें अनुरत होता हुआ विश्रान्ति रूप स्थिति प्राप्त करता है। फिर यह विषय मुझे ज्ञात हो गया इस संतोष का विमर्श करता हुआ उसका उपसंहार कर चिदग्नि प्रकाश को आत्मसात् करता है।[23] प्रतिभा सहृदय प्रमाता की उन्मेषात्मक शक्ति है, जिसके आश्रय से सहृदय व्यक्ति सर्वोच्च प्रकाश में स्थित हो जाता है। *तन्त्रालोक* में कहा भी गया है कि–

प्रतिभा व्यक्ति को वैयक्तिकता के धरातल से उठाकर सद्विद्या की दशा तक पहुँचा देती है। इस दशा में वह शक्ति तत्त्व के रूप में

जाना जाता है, यदि मनुष्य सद्विद्या के धरातल से नीचे नहीं उतरता तो वह परमशिव हो जाता है।[24]

इसी प्रतिभा के कारण सहृदय (काव्य–ग्राहक) में सहृदयता का भाव जागृत होता है। *परात्रिंशिका* में अभिनवगुप्त ने रूढ़ि शक्ति 'सहृदयता' का अर्थ किया है– 'शुक्रक्षोभात्मा हि सहृदयता'[25] अर्थात शुक्र–क्षोभ अर्थात् काम अर्थात् आनन्द या सौन्दर्य यह

क्षोभ शुक्र की सक्रिय स्थिति है, जिसको अभिनव 'सस्पन्द' कहते हैं। यह सक्रिय होती हुई भी संयत होती है। शुक्र की यह 'संयत सक्रियता' वस्तुतः रचनात्मक स्थिति है।

ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञाविवृत्तिविमर्शिनी के अनुसार सहृदयता अभिनव–आनन्दमय चित् का परामर्श है। यह परामर्श (विमर्श हृदय) चित्तवृत्ति की भूमि पर होता है. उस समय वेद्य विश्रान्त (फलतः व्यवस्थित) प्रकाश भाग गौण रहता है।[26]

प्रकाशविमर्शमयता के कारण ही परमशिव 'विश्वमय' स्वरूप है। 'प्रकाश' और 'विमर्श' दोनों परम्पर अवियोग्य रूप में नित्य संयुक्त हैं। 'प्रकाश' शिव तथा 'विमर्श' शक्ति का द्योतक है। परम शिव की विश्वमयी अवस्था ही सम्पूर्ण जगत् की अभिव्यक्ति का कारण है।

अभिनवगुप्त के अनुसार परमशिवतत्त्व का विश्वात्मक रूप प्रकाश – विमर्शमय है। यह रूप शिवशक्तिमय है। चिन्मयावस्था है, सामरस्य है। प्रकाश चित् तथा विमर्श आनन्द है। जिस प्रकार शक्ति शिव का पक्ष है, उसी प्रकार आनन्द भी चित् का एक पक्ष है। प्रकाश रूप चित् शक्ति का विमर्श स्वतंत्र है। अतः विमर्श आनन्द शक्ति है। विमर्श रूप शिवतत्त्व में विश्रान्ति ही आनन्द है। यह पूर्ण है। रसानुभव की प्रतीति को इसीलिये आनन्द रूप तथा पूर्ण माना गया है क्योंकि परमशिव का चित्शक्तिमय जीव या हृदय भी यही है इसके भी परमशिव की तरह दो रूप विश्वोत्तीर्ण एवं विश्वात्मक होते हैं। जिसमें कवि का स्वरूप विश्वोत्तीर्ण है। इसमें हृदय की स्थिति काव्य सृष्टि की सर्जना करती है, जबकि दूसरी ओर सहृदय में हृदय की स्थिति उसी कवि हृदय से तादात्म्य स्थापित करने के लिए प्रयासरत रहती है। हृदय तत्त्व की स्थिति दोनों में समान है। अन्तर केवल इतना है कि सहृदय में हृदय की स्थिति संकुचित होती है, जो विभावादि उपायों के माध्यम से विस्तृत होकर कवि हृदय रूप परमानन्द का स्वरूप धारण कर लेती है।

निष्कर्षतः कहा जा सकता है कि जैसा विश्व सृष्टि के आभास एव प्रतिबिम्बन का स्वरूप त्रिकदर्शन में परिलक्षित होता है उसी के प्रभाववश ठीक वैसा ही स्वरूप काव्य प्रक्रिया में भी दृष्टिगत होता है। और यह सब अभिगुप्तपादाचार्य जैसे आचार्य ही कर सकते थे। जिनका दोनों (त्रिकदर्शन एवं साहित्यशास्त्र) पर समानाधिकार था।

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26. हृदयेन परामर्शलक्षणेन प्राधान्यात् व्यपदेश्याव्यवस्थितस्यापि प्रकाशभागस्य वेद्यविश्रान्तास्यानादरणात् सहृदयता उच्यते। ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञाविवृत्तिविमर्शिनी, भाग 2, पृ. 177–179

डॉ॰ योगेश शर्मा वनस्थली विद्यापीठ में संस्कृत, दर्शन एवं वैदिक अध्ययन विभाग में सहायक आचार्य हैं। उन्होंने अपनी पीएच॰ डी॰ की उपाधि जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय, नई दिल्ली से प्राप्त की है। डॉ॰ योगेश शर्मा के प्रकाशित ग्रंथ हैं: 'काव्य एवं काव्यशास्त्र', 'आदिकालीन एवं मध्यकालीन हिंदी साहित्य' तथा 'भारतीय एवं पाश्चात्य काव्यशास्त्र एवं समालोचना'।

I am a story.
You too are a story.
So is everyone, in fact, everything.
Even the whole big universe is just a story.

We grow up with stories, take or add our two bits and pass them on to the others.

The story about the stories is that,
It always helps to tell yours well.

We make a living by helping tell a story.
Any story.



thehive
Telling well.